

**FT. EUSTIS
HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION**

established in 1965

**The History of
MULBERRY ISLAND**

NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

Mulberry Island History

compiled and published by members of the
Ft. Eustis Historical & Archaeological Association

P.O. Box 4468, Ft. Eustis, VA 23604

Index Jan 1995

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Bold face: current fact sheets.

* indicates future publication being planned.

Titles or numbers may not be the same when they are published. The letter after the numbers indicates the revision level for the purpose of this compendium of history.

FEHAA is an association for the research, writing, celebration and propagation of the history of Mulberry Island and for interests of its archaeology, and welcomes membership and association with like-minded people, military or civilian.

Meets monthly except in July, August and December, for the purpose of review of its on-going work. The cost of its activity and publications are underwritten by the members of FEHAA. The research, administration, and work area is the Matthew Jones House.

Fact sheets can be kept in a see-thru, lock down or 3-ring folder. Supportable corrections or additions to the fact sheets can be made by calling Dick Ivy, publications director, at (804) 898-5090 or to the era director of interest.

Research time invested in the subject of Mulberry Island is welcomed, and suggestions for areas of research will be given if desired. Material is abbreviated and arranged in an graphic and useful way in its historical publications. Monographs relating to Mulberry Island, however, are welcome in the FEHAA file.

Colonial era history. John Curry 874-3106

Civil War era history. Chuck Hunter 229-5868

WWI era history. Anyone interested?

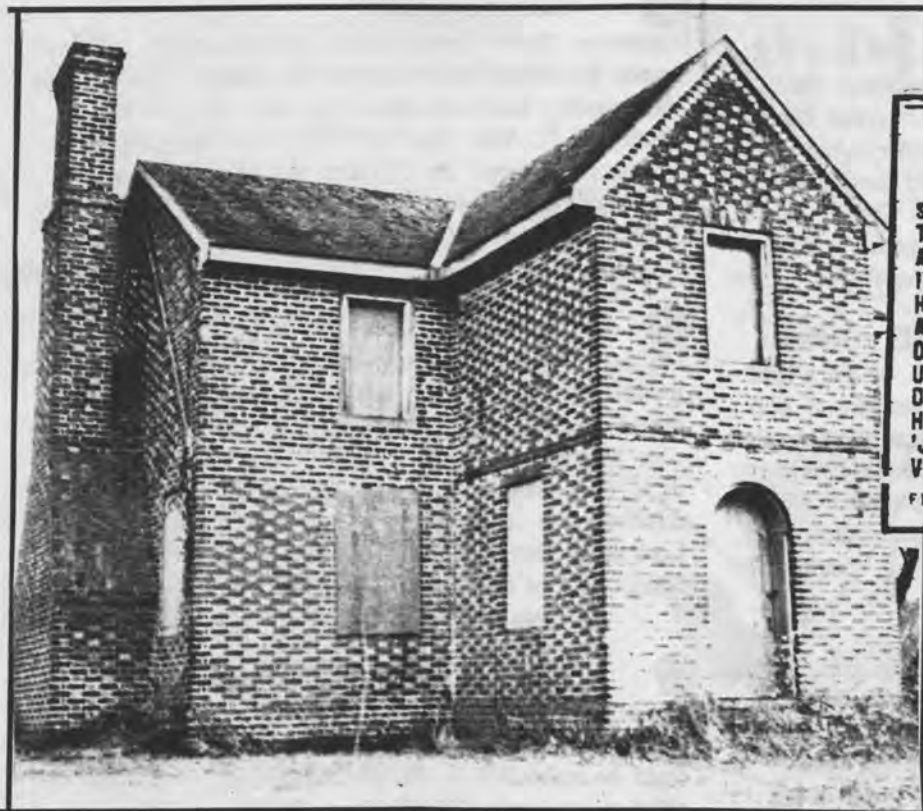
Between-the-Wars era history. Dick Ivy 898-5090

WWII era history. Carl Finstrom 565-1790



**Meetings are 4th Sundays except
for July, Aug., & December,
at the MJH, 2 p.m.**

**Be a part of an Era History Group and
help collect and write our
Mulberry Island history.
This is history you can also dig,**



MATTHEW JONES HOUSE

SAID TO HAVE BEEN CALLED 'BOURNBOM' THIS FINE EXAMPLE OF MEDIEVAL-STYLE ARCHITECTURE WAS BUILT IN THE EARLY 1700'S AS A STORY-AND-A-HALF BRICK HOUSE. IN 1898 IT WAS REMODELED TO A FULL TWO STORIES, WITH ITS ARCHED DOORWAY, MASSIVE CHIMNEYS, AND A UNIQUE TOWER ENTRANCE. IT IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THE TYPICAL MANOR HOUSE OF COLONIAL VIRGINIA. THE 'JONES HOUSE' WAS DESIGNATED A VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARK IN 1989.

FT EUSTIS HISTORICAL & ARCH ASSOCIATION, 1989

#5 on the tour. The "tower" side of the Jones House before being restored by the Corps of Engineers and the National Park Service. It was dedicated May 21, 1994, as an architectural museum with a local historical collection. Open week-ends in summer and at other times by arrangement.

See map p. 3

Historical Markers Introduce Our Past

Three years after the FE Historical & Archaeological Association was formed, its members paid for and planted the first Newport News historical marker "Fort Eustis" at the post's gate in 1968. It was joined by one on "General Abraham Eustis" in 1974. FEHAA encouraged other groups to take part and worked with the City of Newport News, they paying for many. The Army bought at least one of the 13. The last one was erected in 1977. Most of this history can be read on these markers. The details are in FEHAA's Historical series.

Fort Eustis, Tidewater's largest military installation, is 13 sq. mi., including historic Mulberry Island and once, tobacco acreage of Thomas Rolfe. It is at the end of State Rte. 105 and intersects within 2 miles, U.S. 60, I-64 and State Rte. 143.

Settled as early as the 1620s, the population of Mulberry Island grew as part of Warwick County (absorbed by Newport News). It was the western end of Civil War fortifications.

Between the wars, it was a Dept. of Justice prison for prohibition offenders, the Transient Rehabilitation and Works Progress Admin. Camp, and an Army Air Corps bombing range well into WWII.

What to see at Fort Eustis

- * 13 Historical Markers (p. 1-3)
- * Third Port, p. 4
- * Regimental Memorial Chapel, p. 4

The U.S. Army Transportation Museum

The only museum in the U.S. devoted entirely to military transportation, operated by the Army Transportation Center. The large outside park is a collection of locomotives and cars, amphibious craft, trucks, aircraft and helicopters, experimental hovercraft including "a flying saucer". In the exhibit hall are many mementoes, videos and dioramas, vehicles and other displays which depict the Army's achievements in transportation since the Revolutionary War, the "Red Ball Express" of WWII, honors to the Corps, and a Desert Storm exhibit.



Museum hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily except Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Days. Admission free. Closed Mondays & Tuesdays, Sept. 19 thru Mar. 31. A well-stocked gift shop has a variety of emblazoned pins, T-shirts, toys, books, and wall hangings, model kits, souvenirs, etc. Major credit cards accepted. Gift shop closes at 4 p.m.



Historical series 0.1C-Sep 94

FT. EUSTIS HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Researched, written, and arranged by Dick Ivy, Yorktown, and published by

FEHAA, P.O. Box 4468, Ft. Eustis, VA 23604. Past and future issues of Mulberry Island history available by subscription.

1 — FORT EUSTIS

Camp Abraham Eustis was established March 1918 as a U.S. Coast Artillery Training Center and was redesignated Fort Eustis in 1923. During the depression it was a civilian camp. In World War II it served again for Coast Artillery, Anti-aircraft and later a P.O.W. camp. In 1946 Fort Eustis became the training center for the Army Transportation Corps. Since 1962 it has served as the "Home of the Transportation Corps."

Ft. Eustis Hist & Arch. Assn. — 1968

2 — GENERAL ABRAHAM EUSTIS (1786-1843)

Born at Petersburg, Va. and a Harvard graduate, he led a light artillery battalion at the capture of Toronto in the War of 1812. He later commanded Fort Monroe, Va. and began there the first Army service school. He led units in the Black Hawk War, 1832, the Seminole War, 1836-38, and the Canadian Border disputes, 1838-39. In 1918 this post, then a subinstallation of Fort Monroe, was named in his honor.

Erected 1974

3 — GLEBE LANDS

In conjunction with a brick church of the Anglican faith, which stood near this spot in 1660, there were Glebe lands which were set aside for the clergy during their incumbency. The Glebe lands were worked and stocked with necessary buildings, cattle and hogs, by the congregation. Under Act of the Assembly, the Glebe lands were ordered dissolved after the Revolutionary War and Matthew Drewry bought 53 acres in Mulberry Island for 16 shillings per acre in 1804. Erected 1977

Felker Army Airfield, looking to the James River and the Reserve Fleet. (photo courtesy USATC PAO)

4 — SKIFFES CREEK

Known as Keath's Creek in 1632, this stream was probably named for nearby landowner, the Rev. George Keath. It was the boundary between James City and former Warwick County. LTC Wm. Cary (1657-1713), son of Miles Cary, immigrant, inherited the 360-acre Skiffes Creek plantation. His grandson, Wm. Cary Jr. (1708-84) sold it to Allen Jones. A sentry was posted here during the Revolution to warn of British ships in the James.

Erected 1975

6 — MULBERRY POINT & SIR THOMAS WEST

Off this point in early June 1610 anchored the small ships of the starving colonists who had abandoned Jamestown and started down the river to return to England. It was here they were apprised of the timely arrival of Sir Thomas West Lord de la Warr with abundant supplies and new settlers, and the colonists were able to return to their homes at Jamestown. Lord de la Warr (1577-1618) was the first Governor and Captain General of the Colony of Virginia.

Virginia Society Daughters of Colonial Wars - Erected 1976

7 — JAMES RIVER RESERVE FLEET

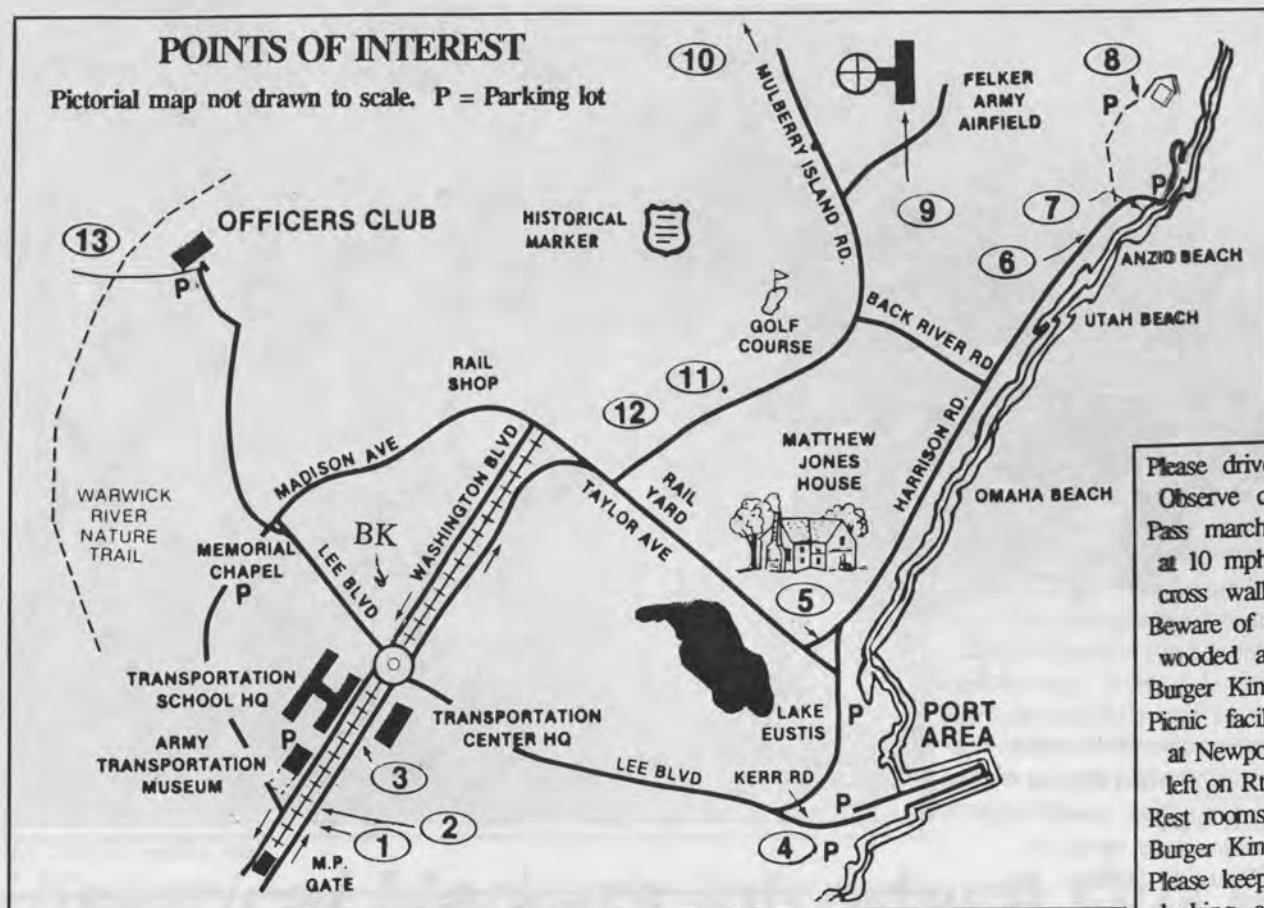
The James River National Defense Reserve Fleet was set up in 1925 to preserve government-owned merchant vessels which could be reactivated in national emergencies. Fleet ships were called to service for WWII, Korea, Suez Canal Crisis, and Vietnam. The James River anchorage reached its peak in 1947 when 640 ships, including many Liberty and Victory Ships, were moored here. The Fleet is maintained by the U.S. Maritime Administration.

Erected 1974



POINTS OF INTEREST

Pictorial map not drawn to scale. P = Parking lot



Please drive safely.
Observe caution signs.
Pass marching troops
at 10 mph. Observe
cross walks.
Beware of ticks in
wooded areas.
Burger King's on post.
Picnic facilities nearby
at Newport News Park
left on Rte. 143.
Rest rooms at Museum,
Burger King, NN park.
Please keep our post
looking clean.

So you have made the tour. The U.S. Army is honoring the past while it is pressing for a professional, more ready Service. We hope your tour was a pleasant and interesting one.

13 — MAGRUDER DEFENSE LINE

From April 5-May 2, 1862, the battery was part of the Confederate Defense Line of Gen. Magruder which spanned the Peninsula. Manned by the Halifax Light Artillery, it fired on Union troops of Gen. McClellan occupying the east bank of the Warwick River. The defenders, though greatly outnumbered, delayed the union army a month, enabling Gen. Lee to prepare the defense of Richmond.

Erected 1975

12 — MULBERRY ISLAND

The peninsula formed by the Warwick and James Rivers was called Mulberry Island by Captain John Smith as early as 1610. Its name came from the wild mulberry trees growing here. Once an Indian hunting ground, it was one of the first places after Jamestown to be settled by the English colonists. Among the early colonial landowners were Governor George Yeardley, John Rolfe and Captain William P. Peirce.

Erected 1974

11 — JOHN ROLFE

The earliest prominent settler on Mulberry Island was John Rolfe, who with others owned a 1700-acre plantation here. Rolfe's introduction of a new type of tobacco was the economic salvation of the Jamestown colony. After the death of his 2nd wife, the famous Pocohontas, he married Jane, daughter of CPT Wm. Peirce, who also had land here. Rolfe died about the time of the 1622 Indian uprising.

Society of the Colonial Dames of the 17th Century

Erected 1974

10 — CIVIL WAR LINE

Part of General John B. Magruder's defense line across the Peninsula, these earthworks were constructed in 1861-62 to prevent Union forces from turning the flank at Mulberry Island. Manned by the 14th Virginia Infantry and later the 5th Louisiana Infantry, and several artillery batteries, the line was abandoned in May '62 when the Confederates withdrew to Richmond before the Union advance at the start of the Peninsula Campaign.

Erected 1975

9 — FELKER ARMY AIRFIELD (Closed to public)

The world's first military heliport, Felker Army Airfield was dedicated on 7 December 1954 at ceremonies attended by aviation pioneer Igor Sikorsky and MGs Rush B. Lincoln and Paul F. Yount. The basic plan of the unique circular landing pad for helicopters was originated by LTG (then COL) Wm. B. Bunker in 1949, anticipating the role of TC in Army Aviation. The \$1,000,000 facility is a memorial to Warrant Officer Alfred E. Felker, Army Aviator.

David E. Condon Chapter, AAAA and
Ft. Eustis Historical & Arch. Association - 1970

8 — FORT CRAFT

This pentagon-shaped earthwork was constructed by Confederate forces in 1861-62. Taking its name from the family living here, it became the right anchor of MG John B. Magruder's line of defense across the Peninsula from Yorktown. The fort was abandoned without combat in May '62 when the CSA withdrew to Richmond in the beginning of the Peninsula Campaign. A fine example of its type, it was designated a National Historic Place in 1974.

Erected 1975



Photo shows part of Third Port on Skiffes Creek just off the James River. It is unique in its variety of floating craft, training facilities, and its compactness. There is also a landship (far right). Among the larger vessels are tugs, the 100-ton floating crane, and ocean-going ships. The Main Pier is to the right of the Landship. The area is named Third Port in honor of the World War II unit which provided cargo handling for the invasion of Italy. A monument stone on the dock commemorates it.

Photo courtesy USATC PAO



The Army Transportation School is the largest activity at Ft. Eustis, training thousands of officers, sergeants and other enlisted persons in aviation maintenance, harborcraft operation and maintenance, rail and line haul motor transport, and in transportation doctrines and operation. The 7th Transportation Terminal Group is parent organization of various task units. Often, units are deployed for worldwide combat support and humanitarian missions.

Dedicated in 1960, the Memorial Chapel of the Transportation Corps has been installed with multi-faceted stained glass windows of Army units past and present purchased by donations from military social groups and Active and Reserve Army units. The only window with a religious motif is one depicting Noah's ark, the military insignia of the 398th Port Battalion of World War II. Each three-sectioned window was installed at the cost of \$1,800. In 1992, the chapel was rededicated as the Regimental Memorial Chapel. Photo by Dick Ivy.

Training & Doctrine Command's Training Support Center and other specialized and technical units are also located at Ft. Eustis.

March 7, 1918

Names on p. 2-3

March 7, 1919

Earlier grants, p. 4
Names on p. 2-3

J. B. Ferguson & Co. were supervising engineers for the Army Corps of Engineers for the record drawing of property ownership on Mulberry Island when the Army bought the acreage on March 18, 1918. The map was drawn on March 6, 1919. Already the Balloon School was in place. The map reproduced on these pages is 77% of the size of the original, leaves off the compass readings of boundaries and cleans up the age marks. Full names are given when available from Who Was Who. Since it is imperative to have a map from which to interpret and expand other history notes, this map is dedicated, and annotated to make references to today's sites. A is for Acres.

Continued on page two

Continued on page two



Researched, written, and arranged by
Dick Ivy, Yorktown, and published by

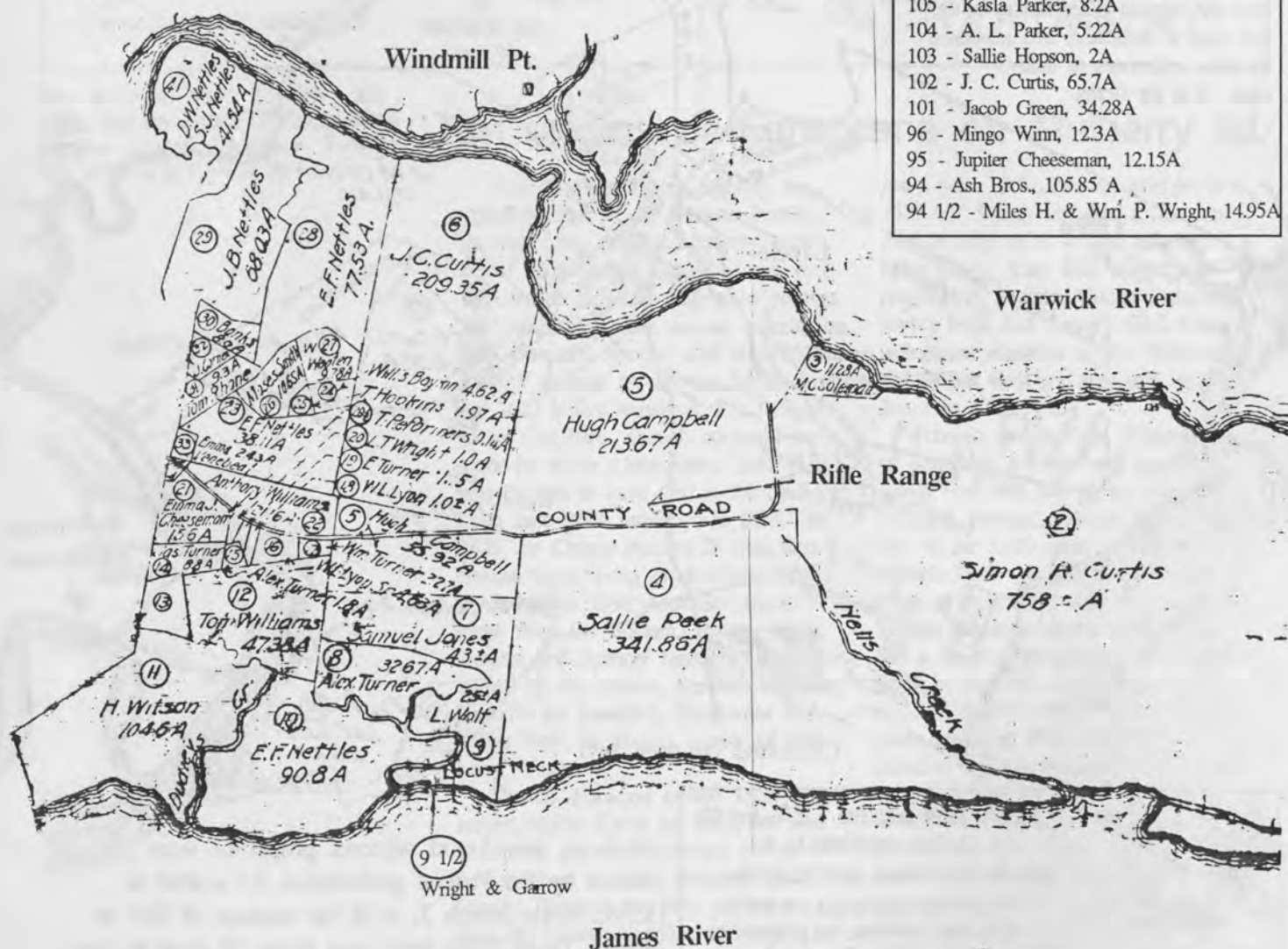
Mulberry Island and adjacent properties were purchased by the Federal government for a total of \$538,000 on March 7, 1918 (an average of \$65 an acre). Those living here were given 30 days to clear off their properties.

33- Emma Venebeal, 2.43A
32 - John Cornex, 5.13A
31 - Thomas Rhone, 9.3A
30 - W. L. Banks, 8A
29 - J. F. Nettles, 77.53A
28 - E. F. Nettles, 68.03A
27 - W. Wooten, 9.78A
26 - Moses Smith, 10.65A
25 - T. Hopkins, 1.97A
24 - Wills Boykin, 4.63A
23 - E. F. Nettles, 38.11A
22 - Anthony Williams, 21.16A
21 - Emma J. Cheeseman, 15.6A, (Black)
20 - L. T. Wright, 1A
20 1/2 - True Reformers, .14A
19 - Eliza Turner, 1.5A
18 - W. L. Lyon Sr., 1A
17 - William Turner, 2.27A

16 - W. L. Lyon Sr., 4.63A
15 - Alex. Turner, 1.8A
14 - James Turner, 2.27A
13 - Ennis Washington, 9.97A
12 - Thomas Williams, 47.38A
11 - H. Wilson, 104.6A
10 - E. F. Nettles, 90.8A
9 - L. Wolf, 25A
9 1/2 - J. T. Wright & C. N. Garrow, 3A
8 - Alex. Turner Sr., 32.67A
7 - Samuel Jones, 43A
6 - J. C. Curtis, 209.35A
5 - Hugh Campbell, 213.67A & 55.92A
4 - Sallie Peek, 241.86A
3 - M. C. Coleman, 11.28A
2 - S. R. Curtis, 758A
1 - Herbst & Leakey, 53.92A & 7.93A

Page one sites, owners

130 - Warwick Chapel , 1A
129 - NN Light & Water Co., 7.78A
128 - S. R. Curtis, 172.8A
127 - T. Dixon, 1A
126 - E. C. Madison, 110.9A
125 - C.C. Curtis, 38.8A
124 - J&E Armfield, 39.29A (Mulatto)
123 - Benjamin Jackson, .5A
122 - Wm. Cheeseman, 1.5A
121 - Alonzo Wright, 2.12A
120 - Sandy Morse, .35A
119 - W. C. Lucas, 1.55A
118 - J. M. Dozier, 431.4A
117 - Wm. Chapman, 115.6A
116 - Zebedee Wallace, 1.85A
115 - C.C. Curtis, 41.95A
114 - Pearl Wright, 10.44A
113 - Candice Wright, 25A
112 - Emmet Milstead, 10.4A
111 - Dudley Wright, 453.6A. (Mulatto)
110 - Thomas Tabb Est., 4A
109 - Donia Winn, 10A
108 - School lot, 1A
107 - P. H. Wright, 308.8 (White grocer)
106 - Wright & Garrow grocery, 13.12A
105 - Kasla Parker, 8.2A
104 - A. L. Parker, 5.22A
103 - Sallie Hopson, 2A
102 - J. C. Curtis, 65.7A
101 - Jacob Green, 34.28A
96 - Mingo Winn, 12.3A
95 - Jupiter Cheeseman, 12.15A
94 - Ash Bros., 105.85 A
94 1/2 - Miles H. & Wm. P. Wright, 14.95A

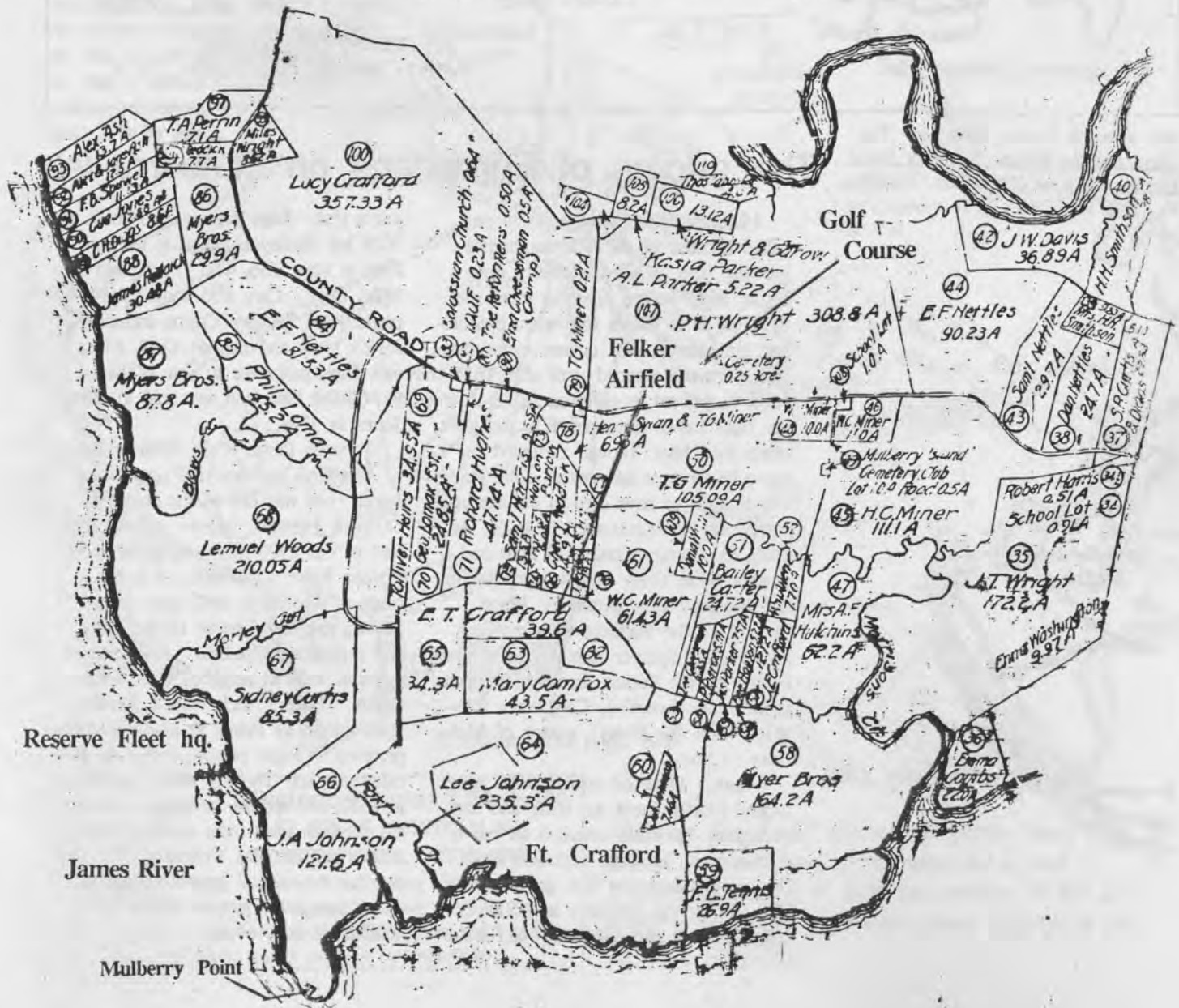


Civil War Fort Crafford was on Johnson's lot #64

100 - Lucy Crafford
99 - Miles Wright, 8.62A (farmer)(Mulatto)
98 - Deliah Reddick, 7.7A (Black)
97 - J. A. Perrin, 17.1A
93 - Alex. Ash, 13.7A (Mulatto)(carpenter)
92 - Alex. & Jane Ash, 12.5A
91 - F. Brown Suwell, 11.13A (Black)
90 - Cue Jones, 12.88A
89 - C. H. Diggs, 8.6A
88 - James Reddick, 20.48A
87 - Myers Bros., 87.8A
86 - Myers Bros., 29.9A
85 - Philip Lomax, 45.2A
84 - E. F. Nettles, 81.53A
83 - Collosians Church, .6A
82 - I.O.O.F. (Odd Fellows), .23A
81 - True Reformers, .5A
80 - Eliza Cheeseman, .5A
79 - T. G. Miner, .21A
78 - Henry Swan, 6.96A
77 - Samuel Harris, 5.1A
76 - John Reddick, 3.79A

75 - Cherry Reddick, 14A
74 - Samuel Harris, 6.05A
73 - Watson Barlow, 13.3A
72 - Samuel Harris, 6.05A
71 - Richard Hughes, 47.74A
70 - George Lomax Est., 24.85
69 - Toliver heirs, 34.95A
68 - Lemuel Woods, 210.05A
67 - Sidney Curtis, 85.3A
66 - J. A. Johnson, 121.6A
65 - E. T. Crafford, 34.3A
64 - Lee Johnson, 235.3A
63 - Mary Cam Fox, 43.5A
62 - E. T. Crafford, 39.6A
61 - W. C. Miner, 61.43A
60 - J. A. Johnson, 7.46A
59 - F. L. Tennis, 26.9A
58 - Myer Bros., 164.2A
57 - J. L. Crafford, 12.12A
56 - Dee Hopson, 5.22A (Zebedee? Mulatto)
55 - James Parker, 7.57A
54 - Priscilla Pierce, 5.01A

53 - Lee Cheeseman, 6.35A
52 - William Allen, 7.7A
51 - Bailey Carter, 24.72A
50 - T. G. Miner, 105.09
49 - Mulberry Isl. Cemetery Club, 1A
- road to cemetery .5A
48 - W. H. Miner, 10A
47 - Mrs. A. F. Hutchins, 62.3A
46 - W. C. Miner, 11A
45 - H. C. Miner, 111.1A
44 - E. F. Nettles, 90.23A
43 - Samuel Nettles, 29.7A
42 - J. W. Davis, 36.89A
41 - D.W. & S. J. Nettles, 41.54A
40 - H. H. Smithson, 28.7A
39 - Mrs. H. H. Smithson, 9.83A
38 - Daniel Nettles, 24.7A
37 - S. R. Curtis & Diggs, 22.54A
36 - Emma Combs, 22A
35 - J. T. Wright, 172.2A (P.H.'s son)
34 - School lot, .9A
34 1/2 - Robert Harris, .51A





from Arthur & Dorothy Vollertsen, The Carys and the Peirces: Mulberry Island Families, Citizen Publications, Yorktown, Va., 1983, for FEHAA, p. 34.

The origins of Europeans on Mulberry Isl.

Mulberry Island was probably so called because of the wild mulberries growing here. Called Mulberry even before 1610 (where colonists were met by Lord de la Warr's ship when evacuating Jamestown), silk culture experiments here were not reported until after 1614. English arrived as early as 1618. In the 1622 Indian massacre, it is thought many died here. Though contested because he wrote a later letter, John Rolfe was thought to have died in the massacre since Jane Rolfe remarried in 1623. In 1625, the Census showed 25 men and 5 women were living on Mulberry Island.

Burgesses from Mulberry Island came from the Barham, Clause, Aiken, Bennett and Spencer families. Land was owned by the Pooles, Bernards, Peppetts, Nowells (or Lowells), Claybornes and Willis Hely (or Heley), pastor of Mulberry Island.

Thomas Harwood owned 1500 acres around Skiffes Creek by 1626, and son Humphrey Harwood inherited all but a section given to Capt. Nathaniel Hurd. Stanley Hundred was first granted to Gov. Sir George Yeardley in 1621. Lt. Thomas Flint and wife Mary had it for

just a year. John Brewer who got it in 1629 left Stanley Hundred to his son John in May 1636, who in turn sold it to Miles Cary. Cary also bought the property of Zachary Cripps including Joyle's Neck and Saxon's Gaol. Miles willed his properties to son William. His Skiffes Crk. land was sold to Allen Jones in 1764.

Tobacco farmer Capt William Peirce of Yeardley's military unit (captain of James Fort) was one of the colony's "Ancient Planters" (planter before 1616). Part of the 1,700 acres eventually went to John Rolfe who introduced a new strain of tobacco in 1612 and married Peirce's daughter Jane in 1619. They had a daughter Elizabeth. Jane married again in 1623 to neighbor Capt. Roger Smith. Baker's Necke was a 360-acre grant named by Peirce in return for transportation of eight persons including Pocahontas's son Thomas Rolfe, probably in 1637, and appears to include some of the previous grant from research done by Arthur and Dorothy Vollertsen. The two say that the original grant lines are still there, though the properties have been subdivided somewhat.



The Matthew Jones House — *then*

On a knoll 25 ft. above sea level, 700 ft. due east of the James, and above the marshland creek now changed into Eustis Lake, some 220 sq. ft. of property was owned by Matthew Jones. The land had once been part of a grant or patent to Capt. William Peirce in 1619.

The original house was a frame structure between two large chimneys and with plaster walls, perhaps in 1680.

In 1729, a Matthew Jones enlarged it with brick to 30'9" x 21'4". It was raised to its 2nd story in 1893 using brick from the 1725 kitchen. Despite the new owner Baptist elder-minister Rev. William R. Webb having Jones' name and date reinscribed in the 2nd story brick when the marble plate over the kitchen door was broken in moving, the area was known as the **Brick House Farm** not the Matthew Jones House.

On March 15, 1918, it was purchased along with other Fort Eustis properties by the Army. When the Army returned at WWII, it promised Peninsula civic bodies the house would not be disturbed according to a Sept. 6, 1940 *Times Herald* (N.N.) article, but due to the shortage of housing at the post, modernized it slightly for a WWII family. The Fort Eustis Historian Emma Jo Davis, FEHAA, and others over the years, encouraged its conservation. (see p. 2)

The Jones House was located in Mulberry Island Parish once a part of Elizabeth City (Hampton) Shire. In 1634 the Colony created more shires based on population centers, it became part of **Warricke River Shire**. In March 1643, it was shortened to Warwick County. In 1952, Warwick became a city, but was merged with Newport News six years later in 1958.



Matthew Jones House, May 1994

**Declared a Virginia Historic Landmark
Apr. 21, '69 and was placed on the National
Register of Historic Places* Jun. 11, '69 an
American Historic Building (Code 08) Nov. 20,
1969, filed in the Library of Congress**

Now — an Architectural Museum

Before 1993, The Corps of Engineers, Norfolk, came up with the money and supervision, and hired the National Park Service Williamsport Training Group (Md.) to complete a design created by John Paul Hanbury, a Norfolk architect, to highlight the three historic periods, and Willie Graham, curator of architecture at Colonial Williamsburg, who did the historical research and consultation. The work began in 1993 and was completed later that year. Owned by the U.S. Army, the house is shown and used by a written agreement with the Fort Eustis Historical & Archaeological Association.

* Combined register of the Amer. Assn. for State & Local History, Nashville, Tenn., the National Park Service and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, the latter two headquartered in Washington, D.C.

**Dedicated by an official ceremony 10 a.m.,
Saturday, May 21, 1994, (see inside) as an
architectural museum house and docent
office (upstairs) of FEHAA. It was decided
by the FEHAA board of directors and its
member curator to have rooms with ap-
propriate memorabilia of the Jones and
Webb families who lived there and the
history of Mulberry Island to make the
house more appealing to a wider audience.**

**ITS FAMILIES OVER THE YEARS,
PAGE 3 & 4**



Historical series 1.3A - Dec 94

**FORT EUSTIS HISTORICAL &
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**

Information compiled and arranged by Dick Ivy,

Yorktown, and published by FEHAA, P.O. Box 4468, Fort Eustis, VA
23604. Free to members. Compendium for sale at Matthew Jones House.

A miracle at Fort Eustis

It was a sunny day, Saturday, May 21, 1994. Nearly 100 military, FEHAA members, community friends, and Jones family descendants from Atlanta, Norfolk, Charleston, Newport News and Williamsburg, gathered to see the post commander receive the house completed by conservators. The general praised FEHAA for its watchcare over the years. The chaplain blessed the House, workers, and guests in prayer. The Fifes & Drums of Yorke Town played colonial music on its plaza and the Yorke Town Crier rang his bell for such an auspicious occasion. Tours of the house followed.

Artifacts found in MJH: Nails, Listerine toothpaste tube, wooden nailer peg, thread spool and hair curlers, fountain pen cap, silver plated spoon, ink well, plastic baby bottle, drinking glass, lantern, ridge cap flashing, copper, two bottles, and glassware pieces.



Dedication of the House: (L-r) Chap (Capt.) Suk Jong Lee; Dick Ivy as emcee; Jim Melchor, Corps of Engr. Norfolk, house project director; John Paul Hanbury; Maj. Gen. David A. Whaley, comdg. general, FE; and Lt. Col. Dan O'Brien, chief of Public Works. (photo by Richard Dunn)

Interest in saving the house goes back to 1923

From research by USAF Maj. Clifton J. Everton, Jr., FEHAA

1923, Mar. 20 - Ltr. to SecWar from 1st Dist. Rep. Andrew J. Montague requesting designation of the Jones House as a national monument under the Act of June 8, 1906, on behalf of the Assn. for the Preservation of Va. Antiquities (APVA).

1923, Mar. 23 - Ltr. to SecWar from Rep. S. O. Bland asking same thing, but also commending Col. Clark, post commander, for discontinuing use of the Jones House as a powder magazine.

1933 - Reply from SecWar to T. J. Wertenbaker, professor of history at Princeton U., who had asked to restore the house to its original form, said that it would require Congressional appropriation, and since a bill was in Congress to transfer Eustis to the Justice Dept, it is not "advisable."

1940, Sept. 9 - Ltr., Robert F. Nelson, public relations counsel, Va. State Chamber of Commerce, to Mrs. Archibald McCrea, Carter's Grove. He relayed concern of Maj. Raymond Bottom, publisher of the Times Herald-Daily Press, on the potential destruction of the house by the government, seeing the Army Air Corps was using the area as a bombing range. He wrote that Bottom also took the matter for some reason unknown to officials of Columbia Pictures.

1962, Feb. 13 - General Orders #12, Fort Eustis, designated the MJH as a historic site.

1965, Oct. 19 - Ltr., Emma-Jo Davis, center historian to Noel Hume, CW dir. of archaeology, requesting an architectural and archaeological study of the house, expressing concern over the rehabilitation and limited funds for preservation. Hume said in a reply letter Nov. 15 the house was of "major importance" but that other commitments prevent any help from Colonial Williamsburg.

1969, June 11 - House placed on National Registry. Public Law protects house from "inappropriate intrusions from any Federally financed or licensed activity."

1969, Sept. 29 - Ltr., Edward F. Heite, archaeological historian to Mrs. Davis, expressing fears of mortar and brick cracking and the possibility that the back wall may fall off. He also stated he thought the original frame house was built between 1660 and '85.

1970, Mar. 10 - Ltr., Frederick Herman, committee chairman,

Preservation of Historic Bldgs., Va. chapter, AIA, to Mrs. Davis reemphasizes need for repair or replacement of the roof, exterminating termites and sealing of all entrances, and to "find a use for" it and "be occupied" as the best policy.

1970, Jun. 3 - Ltr., Calder Loth, architectural historian, Commonwealth of Va. to Mrs. Davis of FEHAA that the Landmarks Commission expresses "favorable interest" in possibilities of acquiring the MJH.

1971, Dec. 10 - Capt. Betty Lou M. Fink of First U.S. Army, Ft. Meade, Md., in response to an implementing executive order (11593) Inventory of Historic Places, recommends preservation because it "is of such an age as to be significant to the early development of the nation."

1972, Sept. 28 - Eustis CG MG Howard F. Schiltz to Henry Clay Hofheimer II, Southern Materials Co., Inc., who had expressed concern for the building, mentions he ordered a study of the structure, funding and Federal/Army statutes and regulations.

1984, Jan. 31 - MJH Architectural report by G. Alan Morledge, AIA, points out deterioration of the house, especially from the roof.

1986, May 31 - Chief of Staff Col. Tancredi requests of Directorate of Engineering & Housing, to protect the house from lawn mower crews and get a temporary fix to the roof to prevent further water damage.

1984, Sep 14 - American Institute of Dendrochronology, Inc., Blacksburg, Va., reported that the main structure was built in 1729 and not 1727. The proposal had been made in July 1983.

1987, Jan. 22 - Allen Morledge wrote to Carl Cannon, post historian, reemphasizing the continuing damage to the house calls for a temporary roof covering as a minimum stop-gap measure.

"Precipitation enters now along almost the entire front slope of the roof. . . At this rate, without any preventive measures, the structure of the house is greatly threatened and costs to stabilize or restore the house will become higher."

1989 - A temporary roof was placed to prevent further damage.

1993, Oct. - A meeting at Eustis Dir. of Public Works to decide on how to proceed on conservation of the house. FEHAA present.



Headquarters for the Webbs

In a story in the **Daily Press** June 2, 1963, it mentions eldest son Noah Webb, an electrician in the NN Shipyard (lived in Hampton) and Robert Webb, the youngest son, a pharmacist, 65, who was born at Brick House Farm on Mulberry Island in 1899 where an "early brick factory once stood", and later lived in Stoneybrook.

Rev. William Robert Webb, Baptist minister, d. 1909. He had established the 3rd Grafton Baptist Church (1877), the Emmaus Church in Poquoson (1878) and also ministered in Williamsburg, and while pastor of Big Bethel (now Bethel) Church (1875-1881, 1882-1892) met, married Mary Elizabeth Williams at the Todd Estate in Tabb. Webb was well thought of at the church and was active at the association of churches level.

Rev. Webb joined the Confederate Army at 14 and later attended Richmond College and the So. Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. The veterans of the Civil War met at Webb's home in Hampton before Webb moved to Mulberry Island. The Webbs had 12 children, but in 1963, only two sons and 3 daughters were left here. The younger kids slept in the shed room alongside the house (see photo above).

Ten families lived on Mulberry Island, including the Craffords, Miners, Wrights, and old houses including a frame house where Cap't Charlie Digges lived. The old Jones family graveyard and an artesian well were mentioned. Fannie Wright also said there was a gravesite 100 yards from the house. Matthew, William S. and Wm. B., and many other Jones are buried there, she said. It has not been investigated since.

The kitchen was 40-50' from the house on the south side.

Two miles away there was a frame school house. Teachers were Ms. Mattie Hogg of York Co., Ms. Lottie Curtis of Lee Hall, and sometimes Ms. Clements who lived with a family

Once thought of as being built in 1650, the sign hails it as America's oldest house. (photo courtesy of the USA Transportation Museum)

during the week, and went home to Newport News on the weekends.

Estelle Webb Powell of Richmond visited here. She was born at the house in 1903, the daughter of Rev. Webb who died in 1908, said. The truck farm did very well in 1908 with an onion crop that brought \$1,000. He also had a line of nets 600 yards out into the James R. Some 21 locust trees on the property, very fragrant. Estelle's mother had a flower garden of moss roses two wooden steps down into her mother's flower garden. The half-circle entrance stairs were added after the Army bought the property. A Lt. and a Sgt. lived there 1920-32 and it was an officer's quarters in WWII.

The map below shows the the MJH, and the graveyard 150 yds. away, over which was built a railroad bed and Harrison Road in 1918. Ms. Wright said the graveyard was really only 100 yds. from the house. The Millstead property map (shows MJH and the gravesite) below, from the files of the Ft. Eustis Historian's Office.



"Matthew Jones House - A Landmark in Peril", a 21 min. VHS video tape is available for sale at the MJH, \$10. Made before the current conservation.

The Jones families

FEHAA is in the process of collecting genealogical data on the Jones family and would appreciate any additions and/or corrections from all who are willing to share. Copies of supporting documents will be particularly prized and added to the collection secured at the Matthew Jones House. Write Sherry Brown Tyler, FEHAA secretary-director, who provided the following, at the FEHAA address, or call 877-6531.

Matthew JONES was paid 200 pounds for public service in 1682 (Journal of the House of Burgesses).

Matthew JONES and wife Elizabeth (sister of George ALBRIDGTON, deceased, are mentioned in item dated 1697-8 (Old Warwick County record book).

York County Deed of 1687 from Samuel SNIGNALL of Poquoson (Also Charles Parish, York Co.) to Matthew JONES of the Parish of Mulberry Island, Warwick Co., for a water mill (commonly called Poquoson Mill) at the head of the New Poquoson River.

The will of Matthew JONES was proved in Isle of Wight County on March 25, 1727/28. Many researchers feel this Matthew was the son of Matthew JONES and Elizabeth ALBRIDGTON. In this will Matthew mentions his wife Elizabeth, daughters Ann, Marget and Agathy, in addition to sons Britton and Servant [Scervant]. Servant was young and was to be brought up in the Fear of God out of the profits of the estate. Matthew left his "tract of land in Warwick County left to me by my father" to his son, Servant. To Britton he left 140 acres in Warwick Co. which Matthew had bought. It is believed that Elizabeth his wife and executrix of this will, was sister of Thomas Day, as in his will (Jan. 19, 1723 Upper Parish of Isle of Wight County) he mentioned sister JONES and brother-in-law Matthew JONES and 3 daughters of Matthew JONES. Elizabeth had first married Capt. Nathaniel RIDLEY, sheriff of Isle of Wight in 1714.

Servant Jones (d. 1772), son of Matthew and Elizabeth Day RIDLEY, served as Justice of Warwick Co. His wife's maiden name is said to have been ALLEN and their children have been listed as: Allen JONES, a prominent merchant of Yorktown; Servant JONES; and John JONES, justice of the peace of Warwick Co.

John, son of Servant, married Mary HUBBARD, daughter of James HUBBARD and Elizabeth (FILMER), who had first married a Mr. ROBERTS. John and Mary's children were Sarah Hubbard JONES, John JONES Jr., Mrs. William WALLER; Mrs. MORRISON; and Mrs. CRAFFORD.

John JONES Jr. (b. 1779) married Sarah DUNCAN and among their children was William Servant JONES (b. Oct. 3, 1804), father of William Benjamin JONES (1825-1878), clerk of Warwick County before and after the Civil War, in which he served as captain. Wm. B. was noted for the jokes he played on his friends and was nicknamed "Hellcat Billy". Billy's brother, Henry Francis JONES (b. 1839) is said to have been the last JONES to be born in the Brick House on Mulberry Island. Henry Francis married Justina NEWMAN and their daughter, Mrs. Fanny WRIGHT (1873-1976), who at age 93, on July 11, 1966, was present at the dedication of a plaque to the service of her uncle, William Benjamin JONES.

Top is a computer reconstruction of the original house that was enlarged with a tower in 1729 (center, part of house), and eventually raised to two stories (bottom art) by Rev. Webb in 1893.

Owners of the Brick House Farm

Matthew Jones I, 166?- 168? possible

Matthew Jones II, 168? possible-1727

Scervant Jones, 1727-1772

William Jones 220A., 1782-1792

Wm. Jones Estate to 1814

John D. Jones, 220A. 1814-1823

William Jones, 220A. 1824-1830

William Jones Sr. Estate 250A., to 1832

William S. Jones, 235A. to 1847

Bennett Wood, 1848-1850

Bennett Wood Estate to 1851

E. A. Wood 235 A. 1851-53

Alden Green 235 A. 1854-1881

Henry Francis Jones, 200A. 1881 to auction.

Thomas & Virginia Tabb, Hampton, 220A. 1887-1893

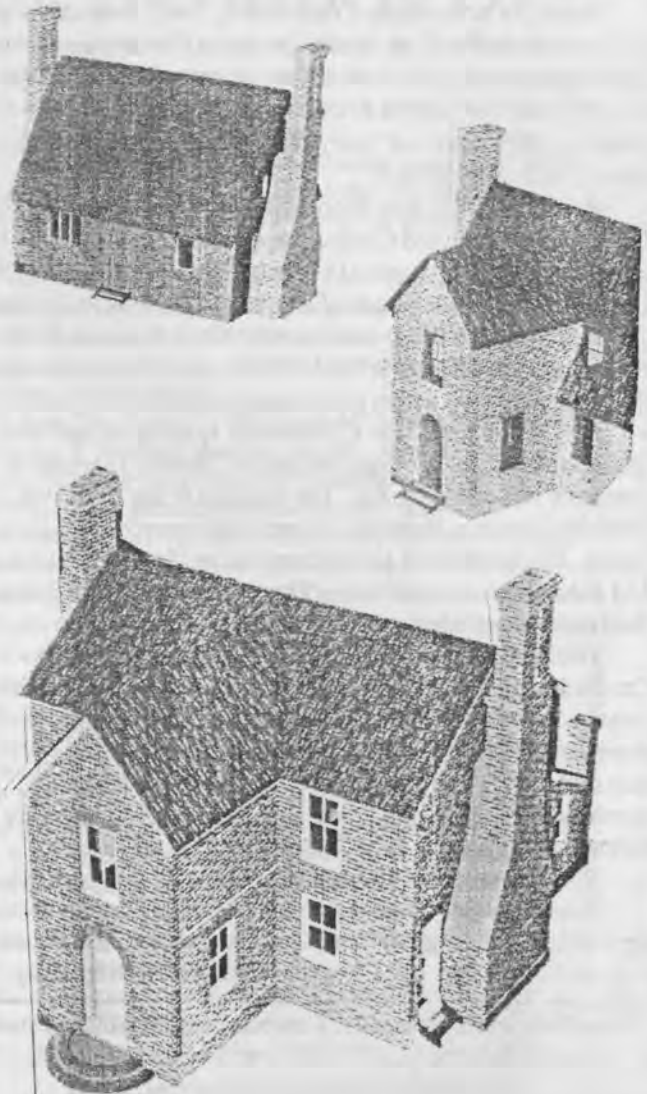
William R. Webb, 220A. 1893-1913

Emmet W. Milstead, 220A, 1913-1919.

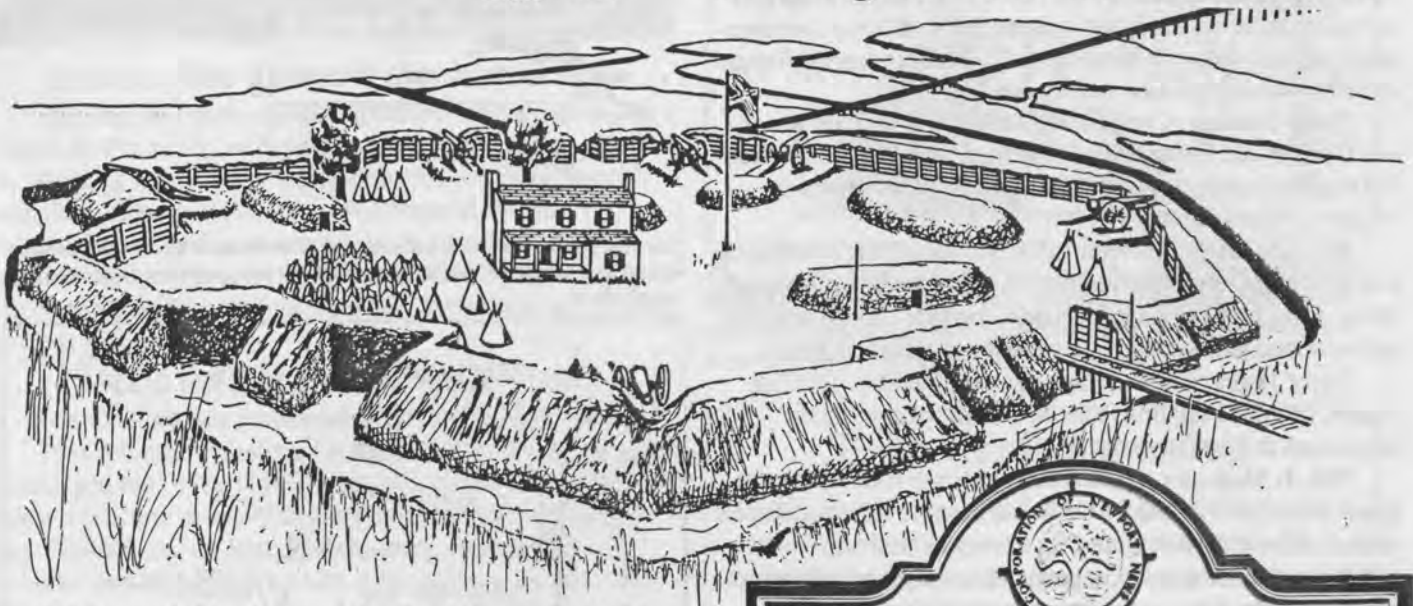
U.S. Government, 1919 to present.

No early documents called it the "Mathew Jones House" (until about 1915) but rather "Brick House" or "The Brick House Farm".

Some of the info quoted here above was taken from the historical study done by the College of William & Mary Project Ctr. Jul-Sept 1990.



Southern Anchor of Magruder's Defense Line



Richmond, Va., became the Confederate Capital in May 1861. All possible approach routes for Federal access had to be defended and fortified. The Virginia Peninsula is between the broad and navigable James and the York Rivers with federally-controlled Fort Monroe in Hampton at its tip.

Commander of the Department of the Peninsula Maj. Gen. John Bankhead Magruder (who had served under Brevet Brig. Gen. Abraham Eustis in the Seminole War in Florida) ordered construction of a fortification on Mulberry Island Point as the southern (right) end of his defense line that extended across the Peninsula. Gen. Robert E. Lee, commanding Virginia forces, appointed Navy Capt. George N. Hollis to superintend the Naval defenses of the James River and service the batteries at the new Fort Crafford. Location of the fort near the water was designed to allow smooth bore weapons to skip their cannonballs across the water surface toward intended targets.

By August, the advance battery works was underway probably by workmen from Charles City and New Kent counties. On Sept. 5, 1861, Magruder ordered the 14th Virginia Infantry to take up position near the "Crawford" house and cooperate in the defense of the place.

More on p. 2

FORT CRAFFORD

THIS PENTAGON-SHAPED EARTH WORK WAS CONSTRUCTED BY CONFEDERATE FORCES IN 1861-62. TAKING ITS NAME FROM THE FAMILY LIVING HERE, IT BECAME THE RIGHT ANCHOR OF MG JOHN B. MAGRUDER'S LINE OF DEFENSE ACROSS THE PENINSULA FROM YORKTOWN. THE FORT WAS ABANDONED WITHOUT COMBAT IN MAY 1862 WHEN THE CSA WITHDREW TO RICHMOND IN THE BEGINNING OF THE PENINSULA CAMPAIGN. A FINE EXAMPLE OF ITS TYPE, IT WAS DESIGNATED A NATIONAL HISTORIC PLACE IN 1974.

(marker above is just inside fort)

A unique look at the Navy role in this event

Fort Crafford, located in the flight area behind Felker Airfield but accessible from off Harrison Road (on the James River) and amid flooded areas, abandoned roads and wildlife management areas, is restricted and roads are closed to general vehicular traffic by the Directorate of Public Works and Military Police, and is off limits after dark. Visitors must be accompanied.

Fort is often open on FEHAA History Days for tours in the spring and perhaps at other times by arrangement to avoid exposure to a great number of ticks and to reduce the necessity of fort maintenance.



Historical series 2.1B-Jan 95

FORT EUSTIS HISTORICAL &
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Researched and written by Col.

(USA Ret.) Charles M. Hunter,

Williamsburg, and edited and arranged by Dick Ivy, York Co., (804) 898-5090, published by FEHAA, P.O. Box 4468, Fort Eustis, VA 23604. Fact sheets a benefit of membership.

The march of events at Fort Crafford

As an additional security for the on-going construction, Magruder requested that **Capt. John R. Tucker**, Confederate Navy, placed his steamer of war, the *C.S.S. Patrick Henry*, in a position in the James River to assist the land forces. Arrangement was also made to transfer two 32-pounder cannon (range of 1900 yards) to the new battery ashore.

Early October: Companies A & B, **Charles City Southern Guards** and **Greensville Guards** of Maj. George M. Waddill's military units were listed as garrisoning the works at Mulberry Island Point.

Nov. 25: Magruder reported to Richmond that a hurricane had almost entirely destroyed the advanced works on Mulberry Point. Most of the civilian workmen (perhaps slaves) deserted and informed the Federals of conditions at Mulberry Point.

Early January 1862: Magruder requested that the *CSS Teaser*, an armed tug boat, join the *Patrick Henry* and the *Jamestown* at Mulberry Island.

Feb. 1: Magruder reported that the lower defenses on the James River as exceedingly weak and ought to be strengthened without delay by building another battery at Mulberry Point and that it should be made impregnable on the land side which could easily be done. If the government couldn't furnish the heavy guns, he asked that he be allowed to take without delay cannon from Jamestown Island and mount them at Mulberry Island.

Mar. 12: Report. Defenses of the Mulberry Island Point at Crafford consisted of five 42-pounder cannon on barbette and the large covering work nearly completed. Alfred L. Rives, acting chief of the Confederate engineer bureau wrote to Capt. Clarke, the on-site builder, urging vigorous prosecution of the works at Mulberry Point. Gen. Magruder earlier had directed Clarke to place the 42- and 68-pounders in barbette in the works surrounding the Crafford home. Rives told Clarke that he had succeeded in working out a plan with the Richmond & Danville Railroad Co. to procure flat-bar railroad iron for protection of the embrasure [an opening in the parapet from which a gun can be fired]. Gen. Lee was particularly desirous that the unmounted guns be mounted immediately. Engineer Rives felt that Clarke should mount them all in the covering works around Crafford's home. Since August, several experienced craftsmen in the Warwick Beauregards (Co. H, 32nd Va. Inf.) cut lumber for gun carriages at Mary's Sawmill on the Warwick River through April 1862.

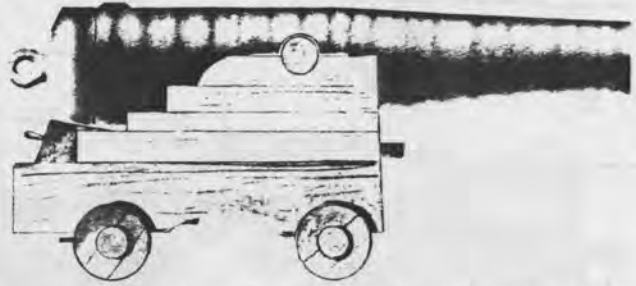
Apr. 4: Upon the advance of Gen. George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac on a line from Warwick Courthouse and Harwood's Mill, Magruder ordered that all light cannon be ready to move and that a man be ready to spike the Navy cannon if it became absolutely necessary.

Apr. 8: Magruder requested field guns to defend the new work at Mulberry Point just completed. It was reported very strong. The battery also mounted eight very heavy guns.

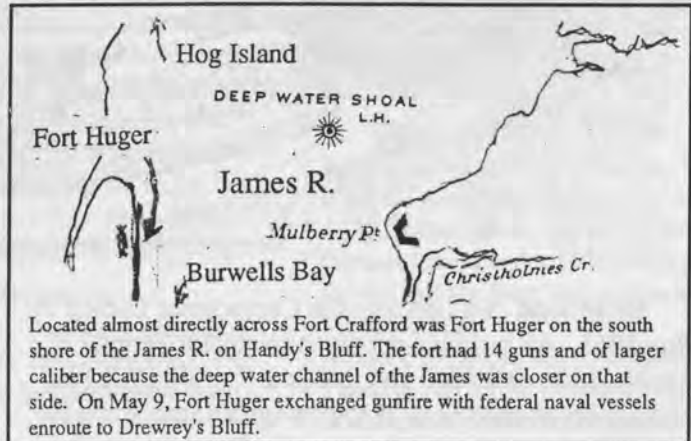
Apr. 19: Two 8-inch cannon at Mulberry Island.

May 2: Orders for withdrawal from new commander Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, to move closer to Richmond. The cannon of the heavy artillery were to be left behind.

May 5: Union Brig. Gen. William F. Smith at Lebanon Church reported heavy black smoke off to his left (Mulberry Island?)



This naval gun on a wood mount is typical of those seized by the Confederates when they acquired the Norfolk Navy Yard and perhaps the ones emplaced at Fort Crafford.



May 7: A squadron of the **6th Pennsylvania Cavalry** commanded by Maj. Robert Morris, Jr., was ordered to conduct a reconnaissance of Mulberry Island fortifications. He reported three guns in the large fort, all 7-inch bore, their carriages burnt; also the carriages of four other guns in like manner. There were 200 7-inch cannon balls. The small fort at the extreme point was not completed, he reported. It contained nothing but cooking equipment. He reported sighting two gunboats on the opposite shore, but was unable to say which side they belonged to since there was no display of flags (They were the *Patrick Henry* and the *Jamestown*).



Face to face with the Confederates, McClellan considered the Magruder Defense Line so strong, he halted and called for his seige guns to be emplaced. Then, a month later, Johnston told his units to abandon positions.

Defense line delays Union's march

Fort Crafford protected the right flank of Magruder's line across the Peninsula, including many trenches at other places on Mulberry Island, a line which delayed McClellan's march with three times the CSA force on Richmond at least by a month, giving Lee time to assemble a force to defend Richmond. No major battle occurred on Mulberry Island. Union forces occupied the area following the Confederate withdrawal towards Richmond.

Troops of the Crafford garrison

Fort Crafford was garrisoned May 1861 to May 1862 by: Two volunteer infantry units, Charles City Southern Guards and the Greensville Guards reflecting their counties of origin and acting as heavy artillery units brought together by Maj. Waddill, and on June 30, 1861, were commanded in a battalion as Co. A and B by Maj. J. M. Patton. In May 1862, the companies were consolidated as Co. K, 53rd Va. Inf. and participated in Pickett's charge at the Battle of Gettysburg. The 53rd's commander, Col. John C. Timberlake, is buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Williamsburg.

14th Regt., Virginia Volunteers.

5th Louisiana Infantry Regt.

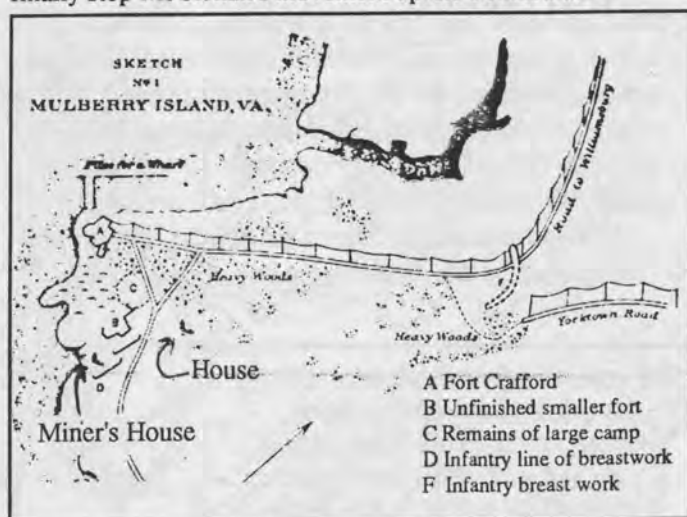
Maj. Roemer's Battery (Co. D, Wise Legion Arty, Virginia Volunteers.

Capt. Young's Battery (Halifax Light Artillery).

Capt. Garrett's Battery (Lee Artillery).

Richmond Howitzers.

When the Magruder Defense Line was ordered withdrawn on May 2 by Gen. Johnston, some to a defense line at Williamsburg, the evacuation probably took place the night of May 3, though some think the Crafford forces left the night of May 2. The Seven Days Battle on the outskirts of Richmond would finally stop McClellan's movement up the Peninsula.



A telegraph line ran from Fort Crafford (A) to Lee Hall, Magruder's headquarters, and then to Williamsburg and Yorktown. Maj. Morris's report contains the only detailed maps of the defenses known to exist.



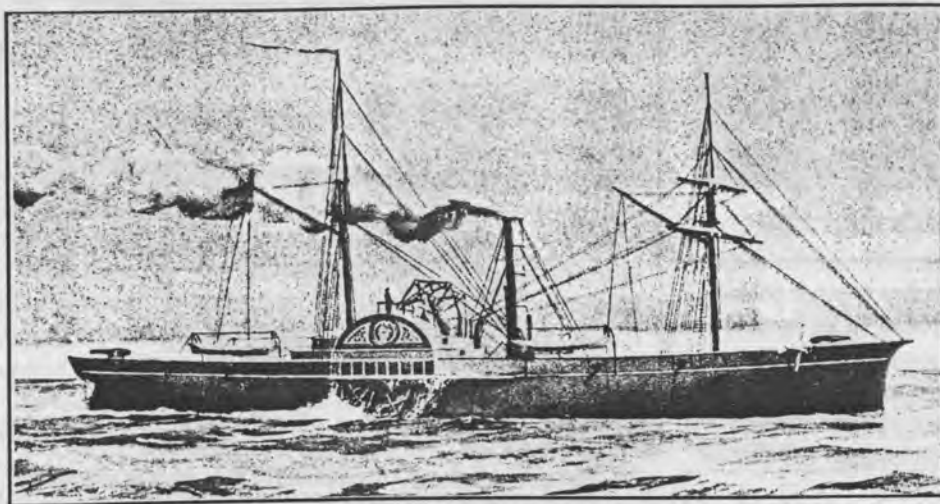
The fort was called Fort Crafford after the war by area farmers for the house which still stood there. The foundation showing the base of the fireplace is still there is surrounded by a wooden guard fence to prevent damage by vehicles.

Fort Crafford today

This pentagon-shaped fort is a perfect example of its type and is remarkably well preserved. It includes an outer wall about 8 ft. high, a moat and an inner wall 18-20 ft. high. It covers approx. 7.5 acres excluding the outer wall and moat. Inside was the Crafford family graveyard, the Crafford slave graveyard, 3 magazines, 2 bomb-proof shelters, and 7 gun emplacements.

The Crafford House was used as headquarters for the fort during the Civil War, and in WWI was repaired and used for plotting artillery fire landing from upriver Camp Wallace. A tower was erected for observation of where rounds fell. The cement blocks on which the tower legs rested can still be seen. In 1925, the bricks of the house were sold to repair the Wren Building of the College of William & Mary, damaged in 1862 during the war. After seeing to it was made off limits to troop training, and clearing of dense vines, Post Historian Jody Davis and the Fort Eustis Historical & Archaeological Assn. requested permission of the Secretary of the Army to conduct an archaeological dig around the Crafford House foundation. The license was good for 3 yrs. beginning April 1971. The artifacts found by the FEHAA diggers were placed in the U.S Army Transportation Museum on post and since have been moved to the Virginia Dept. of Archeology in Richmond.

Fort Crafford was placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register Oct. 16, 1973, and on the National Register of Historic Places May 17, 1974. That year, troops of the 11th Transportation Terminal Bn. cleared more than 50 yrs. of underbrush to create a park-like atmosphere there.



The *CSS Patrick Henry*, flagship of the Confederate States Navy James River Squadron. Capt. John Randolph Tucker was the commander. It was converted from a side-wheel passenger and freight steamer *Yorktown* (1300 tons, 250', complement 150, carried 10 cannon) and later in the war it became training ship for Confederate States Naval Academy located on Drewrey's Bluff near Richmond. It was sunk in the James River in April 1865 to prevent capture by Union forces. From a print of an official U.S. Navy photograph of a wash drawing by Clary Ray (ca. 1898).

To protect Magruder's right flank, the Squadron prevented the Federal navy from outflanking the defense line across the Peninsula. In early March 1862, the Squadron sailed down the James R. past Union batteries at Newport News Point to provide fire support to the *CSS Virginia* (formerly *USS Merrimack*) in the famous Battle of the Ironclads.

Several Mulberry Island soldiers who had volunteered to fill critical personnel vacancies on the *Patrick Henry*, were killed or wounded in that engagement.



Capt. John R. Tucker

- * Born in Alexandria, Va. Jan. 31, 1812
- * Died in Petersburg, Va. Jun. 12, 1883
- * At 14, midshipman in the U.S. Navy.
- * Became Commander in 1855 after service in Mex. War, East Indies and Mediterranean.
- * Joined CSA, promoted to captain.
- * Taken in April 1865, freed in July.
- * Commanded combined fleets of Peru and Chile in the war with Spain in the late 1860s.
- * Charted the upper Amazon for Peru.

— Encyclopedia Americana
Portrait of Tucker painted when in Peru from Werlich.

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The Warwick Beauregards

Company H,

32nd Regiment of Virginia Volunteers

by Lt. Col. (USA, Ret.) John Curry*

The large sentinel that's been guarding the Warwick Courthouse on Old Courthouse Way for these many years is a stoic reminder of Denbigh's past. Erected and dedicated on May 27, 1909, as a tribute to those who served in the Warwick Beauregards as well as other CSA forces. The roster of the unit carries many names — Curtises, Craffords, Miners, Garrows, Youngs, Wynnes, Harwoods, Lees — still linked with local families.

In early 1861, the Beauregards were recruited by 29-yr.-old **Dr. Humphrey Harwood Curtis** of nearby Endview Plantation (still standing on Yorktown Rd. at the Jefferson Ave intersection) in upper Warwick Co. The company was large by Civil War standards, some 80 men strong, all from Upper Warwick and Mulberry Island. Curtis was selected as the captain, by custom, for his investment in the company's formation.

Wealthy leaders

The leaders, including NCOs, were wealthy men. Curtis had real estate holdings of over \$8,000 and personal property assets of \$21,000. 1st Lt. **William G. Young** of Denbigh Plantation had real estate holdings over \$33,000 and personal property over \$85,000. Much of the latter was in slaves, the Warwick Census recording 127. He also owned Young's Mill, a building still standing at Warwick Blvd. and Oyster Point Rd.

The Curtises dominated the roster, typical of a rural company — 8 of them. Captain Curtis' 21-yr.-old brother 2nd Lt. **Thomas G. H. Curtis** and worth \$7,000. 3rd Sgt. **Robert G. Curtis** and 4th Cpl. **William H. Curtis** were the captain's cousins. There was another Humphrey Harwood Curtis, probably not a son, and definitely not the father. Only one Curtis would still be on the rolls at the very end. Officers were by election. The other officer was 3rd Lt. **William A. Smith**.

In its ranks were a doctor, 23 farmers, 11 laborers, 4 carpenters, 3 merchants, 2 overseers, a timber getter, a lawyer, sailor, constable and a coachmaker. The timber getter was 2nd Sgt. **Virginus Nash** with a personal wealth at \$39,000. The entire company was not of the "silver spoon" variety, however, because 67 of the initial privates [Warwick vets calculation]

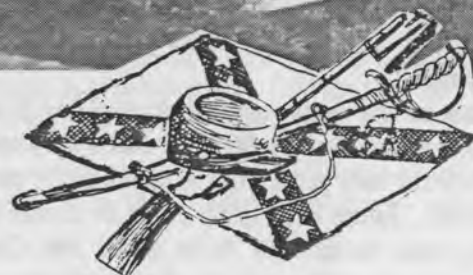


Historical series 2.2A - Feb 93

FT. EUSTIS HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Researched and written by Colonial Director John Curry, Denbigh, arranged by Dick Ivy,

Yorktown, and published by FEHAA. P.O. Box 4468, Ft. Eustis, VA 23604. Past issues and annual subscriptions available also to non-members. Add. information and supportable challenges to content herein are welcome. Revisions identified by letter and date.



Co. H manned Fort Eustis' flank and fought the Battle of Dam No. 1, and 11 other campaigns. Lt. Thomas Curtis was killed at Sayler's Creek, the Beau's last battle.

went from a high of \$300 to a low of what he wore on his back. Average age was 27.12 years. There were a few 50 and 60 year olds who were later released, as the accepted ages were between 17 and 35. **Ralph Copeland**, 14, was the drummer boy.

The Beauregards were officially mustered into the CSA as Co. B, 32nd Regiment of Virginia Volunteers. The company designation changed shortly to Co. H. The regiment was commanded by **Col. Benjamin S. Ewell**, president of the College of William & Mary. He resigned W&M at the outbreak of hostilities, and served on the Confederate staff through the war.

The Beauregard roster, page 4

The unit is formed

Capt. Curtis was no longer commander. The company had held elections on May 1, and favored 56-yr.-old Edmond Curtis. H. H. Curtis Jr. remained behind as York County Physician. Edmond proved to be a poor choice, inasmuch as he was in ill health and died before the unit left the Peninsula. Thomas Curtis was replaced by William C. Miner, former 5th Sgt. and holder of extensive lands on Mulberry Island. Thomas returned to leadership in December as a lieutenant.

On May 26, 1861, the day before the unit marched to Williamsburg's Camp Page for mustering in, Capt. Curtis hosted a farewell party for the unit and their families at Endview plantation. It would be just over a year later when the unit would beat a hasty retreat and pass Endview on their way to set up defensive positions in front of Williamsburg.

In August, Co. H received its uniforms: 75 coats, pants, drawers, and socks along with 50 caps and 55 knapsacks from Richmond Army headquarters. Officers had to provide their own uniforms.

Lt. William G. Young of the Beauregards was detailed by the Regiment to Genral John B. Magruder's Quartermaster Dept. and was quartered in a private home near Yorktown and he wrote he heard the sounds of the Battle of Big Bethel and recorded his thoughts in a letter to his wife.

Many of the Beauregards were scattered in the area doing war essential work based on their civilian occupation. Several built gun carriages at a Macy's saw mill. One private, James F. Hopkins, was in charge of constructing what would come to be called Fort Crafford on Mulberry Island. The majority of the unit was called upon to help burn Hampton in order to deny its facilities to the Union forces.

As the Union build-up materialized at Fort Monroe, the Beauregards were assigned positions on the second line of defense developed by Gen. Magruder.

Their baptism of fire was at Dam No. 1 (today's Newport News Park) on May 16, 1862.

The forces fell back to Williamsburg with other CSA forces and fought the Battle of Williamsburg. Those at Macy's Sawmill and other enterprises were either cut off or trapped behind the lines. Many were dropped from the rolls. They were considered deserters until after the war when some records were corrected.

John Green became captain and led the unit until his capture at the Battle of Five Forks. Lt. Young lost his post in the elections and returned to his Denbigh Plantation, and subsequently moved his family to Salisbury, N.C.

Ten of the Beauregards were killed in action, four others wounded. Nine died in hospitals from various diseases. Four died in Union prisons. Four were desert-

Campaigns Co. H, 32nd Regt. 1862-1865

Dam No. 1, April 16, 1862
Battle of Seven Pines, May 31-June 1, 1862
Savage Station, June 29, 1862
Malvern Hill, July 1, 1862
Sharpsburg, Sept. 17, 1862
Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862

Brook Turnpike (Road), Richmond, Mar. 11, '64
Cold Harbor, June 3, 1864
Howlett's Farm, June 16, 1864
Fort Harrison, Sept. 26, 1864

Five Forks, April 1, 1865
Sayler's (Sailor's) Creek, April 6, 1865

ers, other than those "left behind" at the first battle. Two of the deserters were conscripts, two others were veterans who finally came home in 1865.

Eight were discharged for being either too old or too sick to withstand the rigors of the campaign. During the course of the war, 22 had been captured, the bulk of them at Sayler's Creek (just northeast of Farmville, north of Rice) on Apr. 6, 1865, just 3 days before the final surrender at Appomattox Court House. The 32nd was down in strength to 30 fit for duty and it was just overwhelmed, their corps surrounded by Union forces under the command of Gen. Phillip Sheridan, in a move known as "Sheridan's Ride". Ewell and 11 other generals, colonels, and about 7,000 rank and file, surrendered Apr. 6, in the "largest unstipulated surrender of the war." Thomas Curtis was among the dead on that day. He had made his way through Federal lines in December 1862 to join his unit as the 2nd lieutenant. He is buried in the Curtis graveyard.

The Garrow family also lost two members. John T. Garrow died at home in what is now Newport News Park after his wife and family fetched him from the trenches on the Warwick River Line in 1861. James B. Garrow, his brother, is listed as dying in Richmond's Chimborazo Hospital from acute dysentery in 1863.

The Patrick family also lost two members. Henry died of disease in the hospital while William was wounded at Sharpsburg and later died from the wounds. Thomas Patrick survived the war and was captured at Sayler's Creek with some 12 other Beauregards.

After the war, it was hard times

Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865. What was left of the Beauregards went home. Of the 94 men who were on the rolls at one time or another, 23 died while in service, 5 were wounded and 22 were captured. Some were recuperating from the harshness of the campaign, the rigors of prison, and the effects of the wounds and several died within a year of returning.

Houses occupied by others

For the returnees, it was a big adjustment. Slavery had been abolished. Many of the farms had been laid to waste. The Denbigh Court House had been ransacked by Federal troops and so many of the property records were destroyed allowing "Carpetbaggers" and squatters to establish quit claims and seize property. It was true also for those who had left the area because of the war. One story concerns a family which returned to their home "Peartree Hall" on what is now Campbell Rd. only to find it occupied by several former slave families. The home, when they left, had a porch on the front and rear. The front porch was two stories high. The porches were now gone, used for firewood by the squatter occupants.

At Young's Denbigh Plantation, some former slaves had remained and worked what land they could to sustain themselves. They were more or less left on their own by the occupying Provost Guard of the Union Army. The Youngs had left in 1861 less those who joined the CSA for Salisbury, N.C.

Bad fortune beset Richard D. Lee, the owner and builder of Lee Hall, which mansion still stands and Lee's Mill. Lee contributed everything he had to the Confederate cause. At the end of the war, he was penniless and in great debt. His holdings including the Lee Hall mansion were seized by creditors. Lee's wife, a Young, had inherited a farm on Mulberry Island where they lived out their remaining days.

Many returnees, seeing the situation, moved away for good. Warwick County was at its worst economically and politically. Martial law still prevailed administered from distant Fort Monroe. Land ownership cases were attempted only to be resolved by petitioning the U.S. Military. Parke Rouse's When the Yankees Came, based on George Ben West's memoirs, gives a good account of the hard times faced by Warwick County residents.

The Miners, Samuel and William, cousins of Humphrey Harwood Curtis, returned from the Federal prison at Point Lookout, Md., and went back to their endeavors on Mulberry Island. Samuel died a year later from consumption he caught while a prisoner at Point Lookout prison.

The Mallicotes, Franklin who was captured at Dinwiddie Court House returned as did R. T. and Sylvanus who was wounded at Sharpsburg. George Malli-

Hopkins builder of Fort Crafford

The builder of Fort Crafford, James P. Hopkins, was listed as the overseer of the Miner farm in the 1860 Warwick Co. census, for Sarah Miner and her two sons, William, 20 and Samuel, 16, and 20 slaves who had been with the Miners for some time. The farm was near the Reserve Fleet hq. about a half mile from Fort Crafford. Traces of the house were seen in 1973 by the author. In records, Hopkins was identified as illiterate, could neither read nor write, yet he supervised the construction of the 7.5 acre Fort Crafford, Mulberry Point (destroyed by a hurricane in 1861) and earlier the Jamestown Island defenses. He was known for his uncanny ability to design irrigation systems, develop plans for clearing land and in erecting fortifications.

He was captured in Boone Co. and was sent to the Union prison camp at Camp Chase, Ohio. He was released in a prisoner exchange on Aug. 25, 1862. Prison had taken its toll. Hopkins was never the same again. He died of consumption June 2, 1864.

cote was buried on the field at Sharpsburg where he fell. Years later, Sylvanus who earned the reputation as a scout behind Union lines, went to the Old Soldier's Home in Richmond, but home records stated he went AWOL and was never seen or heard from again.

* John Curry, retired as a Transportation Corps Lt. Col. in 1986 from Ft. Eustis, is senior logistical analyst at the NN Ship Building, lives in Denbigh and writes an historical column, "Denbigh Gone By" each week in the Denbigh Gazette, and has had a long association with Warwick history. From Chicago, he has a BS in history from John Carroll U., Cleveland, he has a certificate in Colonial archaeology from College of W&M in 1974, and participated in many area digs.

A reunion of 3 in 1909

After the war, various chapters of veterans were formed of the Confederates, many Beauregards belonging to them. The Beauregards would not form ranks again until some 44 years later in 1909 at the dedication of the Beauregards Monument (\$2,036.10 paid out of a fund created by Warwick County Supervisors) at the new Denbigh Courthouse, May 27. William Miner, who went from private to lieutenant in the Beauregards, was a prime mover in contacting veterans of the unit and others for the event. On that day, according to Miner's list, 13 were still living along with seven others from area Civil War units. Present at the ceremony in uniform with Miner were H. F. Jones, D.C. Patrick (who reportedly stood guard in the rain at the monument the night before with his musket because of a rumor of vandalism), 3 sons, J. C. & S.R. Curtis, and J. T. Garrow and their wives, and one great grandson of D.C. Patrick, Faye Curtis. It was an exciting day filled with festivities. Levin Smith's Hotel across from the Courthouse was filled to capacity. Levin himself died just two days later.

THE LATE GREAT BEAUREGARDS

COMPANY H, 32ND VIRGINIA INFANTRY REGT.

Name	rank/position	Remarks		
CURTIS, Humphrey H.	Capt. 5/27/61	NR 62	LEWELLING, Wm. P.	Pvt. 5/27/61 (POW 5 Frks) Saylor's Crk 4/6/65
CURTIS, Edmond	3rd Cpl. 5/27/61		LEWELLING, Jn. (W).	Teamster +
	Capt. 62	DOD Wmbg 1862	MALLICOTE, Franklin J.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + POW Five Forks 3/31/65
GREEN, John A.	1st Sgt., 5/27/61		MALLICOTE, R. T.	Pvt. SACH 4/9/65
	Capt., 1862	+ POW Richmond 10/6/65	MALLICOTE, George W.	Pvt. 5/27/61 WIA Sharpsburg 9/17/62 DOW 10/3
YOUNG, Wm. (S) G.	1st Lt., 5/27/61	NR 5/4/62 Disch.	McINTOSH, Samuel Y.	Pvt. 5/27/61 (Disch. 61) Des. 5/4/62+
CURTIS, Thomas G.	2nd Lt., 5/21/61	KIA Saylor's Crk., 4/6/65	MOORE, Gowan L.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + POW Five Forks 3/21/65
SMITH, Wm. A.	3rd Lt., 5/27/61	Detailed Rver Svc, '61	MARROW, Thomas K.	Pvt. 5/27/61 WIA Sharpsburg 9/17/62
NASH, Virginius (B) W.	3rd Sgt., 5/29/61			(KIA Cld Hrbr, 64)
	3rd Lt., 1862	+ Paroled Richmond 4/3/65	NORRIS, Wm. H.	Pvt. 5/27/61 KIA, Malvern Hill, 7/1/62
MINER, Wm. C.	4th Sgt., 5/27/61		PATRICK, Wm. M.	Cpl. 5/27/61 (KIA, Fredburg '63) DOD 1/16
	1st Sgt., 1862		PATRICK, Daniel C.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + Paroled in Richmond 4/15/65
	1st Lt., 1863	POW, Five Forks 4/1/65	PATRICK, Henry	Pvt. 5/27/61 (DOW Richmond 63) DOD 1/4/63
CURTIS, Saml. G.	1st Cpl., 5/27/61	NR, Sisc 8/27/62	PATRICK, Thomas C.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + POW Saylor's Crk 4/6/65
COOK, Wm. B.	2nd Cpl., 5/27/61	+ KIA Cold Harbor 6/3/64	POWELL, Jas.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + POW Saylor's Crk
MALLICOTE, Sylvanus H.	4th Cpl., 5/27/61		PETERS, Mathew	Pvt. 5/27/61 + Des. 5/4/62
	1st Sgt., 1863	SACH 4/9/65	PETERS, (D) Benjamin H.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + Des. 5/4/62
CURTIS, Wm. H.	Cpl., 5/27/61	+ Des. 5/4/62	SANDIFER, Jn. H.	Pvt. 5/27/61 (DOW ChesterSta.63) DOD 8/19/64
LACKONBY, Jn.	Pvt. (Cpl., 64)	(POW 5 Frks) Furloughed 3/16/65	SANDIFER, Thomas Pierce	Pvt. 5/27/61 + POW Hatchers Run 3/31/65
MINER, Saml. H.	Cpl., 5/27/64	POW, Five Forks 4/1/65	SMITH, Samuel H.	Pvt. 5/27/61 Des. 12/30/64
			SMITH, Wm. H.	Pvt. 5/27/61 DOD 7/24/61
*ALLEN, T.	Pvt.	NBD, Yorktown, 1861	TABB, Jn. L.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + POW Five Forks 3/21/65
ALLEN, Richard	Pvt. 5/27/61	WIA, Cold Harbor, DOW, Richmond, 6/4/64	TABB, Lewis (D.) P.	Pvt. 5/27/61 + No record after 12/31/64.
		Des. 5/4/62	TULLY, Elijah (L) R. (cook)	Pvt. 5/27/61 + Fed PM list Richmond 1865
BUCHANAN, Wm. C.	Pvt. 5/27/61	+ Capt 3/31/65 DinwiddieCH	VAIL, Jn.	Pvt. 5/27/61 (Disch. 61) Des. 5/4/62
BURCHER, James G.	Pvt. 5/27/61	KIA, Culpeper CH, 11/3/62	WALL, Wm. Lewis	Pvt. 5/27/61 + No record after 12/31/64
BARHAM, Robert	Pvt. 5/27/61	Deserted 5/4/62	WALKER, Martin	Pvt. 4/10/62 KIA, Sharpsburg, 7/17/62
BURNHAM, Wm. C.	Pvt. 5/27/61	POW 12/8/62	(WALKER, A.	Pvt. UNK.)
BURRIS, Wm.	Pvt.	+ paroled 4/18/65 Richmond	WOOD, Jas. B.	Pvt. 4/1/61 DOW, Richmond, 1863
CURTIS, Robt. J.	Pvt. 5/27/61	+ paroled 4/18/65 Richmond	WOOD, Mathew	Pvt. 5/1/63 (UNK.) 5/1/63 Left in Richmond,
CURTIS, John L.	Pvt. 2/28/64			Under writ with judge 12/31/63.
COPELAND, Ralph W	Drumr 9/1/63			
COX, Wm.	Pvt. 5/27/61	+ POW Burkeville 4/6/65		
CRANDOL, Richd M.	Pvt. 5/27/61	Deserted 5/4/64		
CRAFFORD, Wm.	Pvt. 5/15/63	Deserted 2/28/65		
(CURTIS, W. H.	Pvt.	Detailed Telegraph Svc, '61)		
CURTIS, H. H.	Pvt.	(Disch. 1861) Des. 5/4/62		
(COLEMAN, R.	Pvt.	NBD, Yorktown, 1861)		
(COLEMAN, W.	Pvt.	KIA, Wmbg., 1862)		
DREWRY, Matt. P.	Colors 5/27/61	+ On Federal Provost list 1865		
DAVIS, Robt. L.	Pvt. 5/27/61	(DOW 64), KIA New Mkt 5/64		
DAVIS, Wm. H.	Pvt. 5/27/61	(POW, 5 Forks, 65) Des. 1/18/65		
DUNN, Richard	Pvt. 5/27/61	Deserted 5/4/62		
DUNN, Samuel	Pvt.	DOD, Denbigh, 1861		
DURHAM, Jas.	Pvt. 8/10/62	Des. 5/12/62		
EPLING, Henry	Pvt.	POW Cld Hrbr 6/6/64 DOD 9/21		
		at Point Lookout		
FOX, Wm Allen.	Pvt. 5/27/61	Detailed hospital.		
FISHER, Chas. A..	Pvt. 5/27/61	Detailed to Navy Ord., 1861		
GAMBOL, Taylor	Pvt. 2/28/62	KIA, Wmbg. 1862		
GARRETT, Jas. M.	Pvt. 5/25/62	Des. 10/6/63		
GARROW, J.	Pvt.	NBD, Richmond, 1863		
GARROW, Jas. T.	Pvt. 5/27/61	DOD, Denbigh, 10/11/62		
GOLDEN, Jason P.	Pvt. 5/27/61	(Disch 1861) Des. 5/4/62		
GREEN, George K.	Pvt.	DOD, Petersburg 1863.		
HARWOOD, John L.	Pvt. 5/27/61	+ POW Saylor's Crk 4/6/65		
HARWOOD, Thomas M.	Sgt. 11/4/61	+ SACH 4/9/65		
HAUGHTON, Jas L.	Pvt. 5/27/61	Des. 5/4/62		
HAYNES, J.	Pvt.	POW Five Forks, 1865, DIP, 1865		
HAWLEY, Jas. H. T.	Cpl. 2/4/62	POW, Five Forks, 3/31/65		
HAWLEY, Wm E.	Pvt. 5/27/61	POW, Five Forks, 3/31/65		
HOPKINS, James F.	Pvt. 5/27/61	DOD, Danville Hosp., 6/2/64		
	(Capt.)	No official record of being captain		
JONES, George Jr.	Pvt. 5/27/61	DIP. Pt. Lookout 1863		
JONES, Donaldson P.	Pvt. 5/27/61	Disch., 3/1/62		
KELLUM, Jesse	Pvt. 5/27/61	(Disch., 61) Des 5/4/62		
KELLEY, Thomas	Pvt. 5/27/61	(Des., 64) POW 4/18/65 Fmville		
KERRIGAN (KIERGAN), M.	Pvt. 5/27/61	(Disch. 63) Disch 9/8/62		
KENNADY, Daniel	Pvt. 5/27/61	(Disch 63) No disposition.		
LEE, Thos, W.	Sgt. 5/27/61	(POW 5 Frks) 4/6/65 Paroled 4/18		
LEE, Humphrey W.	Sgt. 5/27/61	(POW 5 Frks), Saylor's Crk 4/6/65		

Confederate records in 32nd Virginia Infantry by Les Jensen, include these compiled along with first names where available and enlistment dates and remarks (except those in parentheses by the remembrances of vets) by Tim Smith of Dare.

ALLEN, Edw.	Sgt. 5/27/61	Transferred to Co. K.
BREEMAN (BRAMAN)	Pvt. 5/27/61	Absent w/o leave 6/6/62
BROWN, Jas.	Pvt. 5/27/61	Disch 12/24/61
BROWN, Shephard	Pvt. 5/21/61	Transferred to Bedford Lt.Arty
BURWELL, Carter (slave)	Cook 4/1/64	Present thru 12/31/64
GAMBOL, J. T.	Pvt. 2/28/62	Transferred to Petersburg unit.
GARROW, Jn. T.	Pvt. 5/27/61	DOD 1861
JONES, Wm. (slave)	Cook 4/10/64	Present thru 12/31/64
LEE, Wm. Jr.	Pvt. 5/27/62	Disposition unknown.
PATRICK, Edmond L.	Pvt. 5/29/61	Present 12/31/64 Not on parole list
SEBURN, Isaac F.	Pvt. 5/27/61	Des. 8/20/62

NBD - Non-Battle death. Des. = Deserted () remembered by Warwick vets, but not that way in Confederate records.

DOW - Died of wounds. DOD - Died of disease. Disch - discharged + Remembered by Warwick vets as surrendering at Appomattox Court House

DIP - Died in prison SACH - Surrendered at Appomattox C.H.

KIA - Killed in action, WIA Wounded in action

* Not on Jensen's list. NR - Not reelected in position

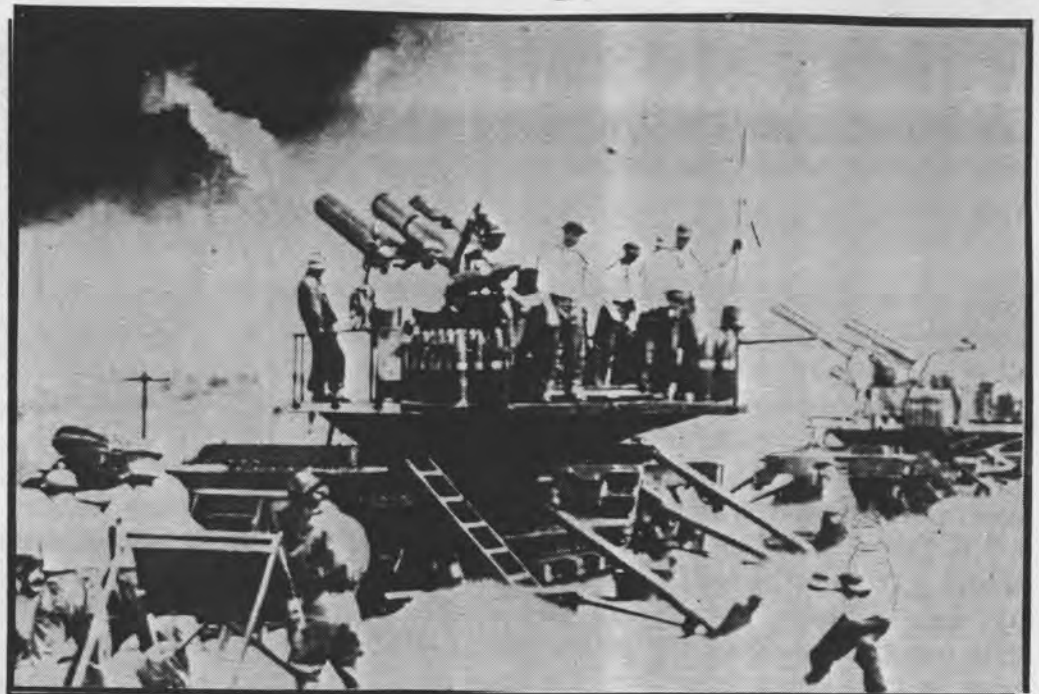
Green a young commander at 19; died at 33

John Archibald Green, just 19, was appointed the company commander in May 1862. Having led the unit in eight battles, he was captured at the Battle of Five Forks (west of Petersburg) Apr. 1, 1865 at which the Confederates were outnumbered and overwhelmed. He was placed in the infamous Libby Prison in Richmond, and was granted parole on Apr. 24, 1865. In the 1870's census, John Archibald Green was listed as a school teacher in the Stanley Magistrate. He had also lived on Mulberry Island. He never married. At age 33, he died of natural causes and is buried at Lebanon Church.

Railcar-mounted guns
of the 52nd CA Regt.
sound off.

Photos courtesy of
USA Transportation Museum.

The camp was established Mar. 19, 1918, by Authorization #86. Missions were established in later orders in 1918 to include being part of the Coastal Defense of the Chesapeake Bay and Artillery concentration camp and as a replacement training center for Coast Artillery Corps units.



WWI Artillery training center — Camp Eustis 1918-1919

My Dear President:

In a project recommended by the General Staff it is proposed to establish in the vicinity of the Coast Defenses of Chesapeake Bay a point of concentration, organization, equipment, training and embarkation of the troops of the Coast Artillery Corps intended for duty abroad as heavy field artillery, and as trench mortar batteries and anti-aircraft artillery troops.

In order that the necessary land may be purchased for this project, I request that you allot from your Emergency Fund "National Security and Defense" the amount of \$538,000.00 for the purchase of Mulberry Island, also land for a suitable firing position for the extreme range armament, and a camp site, all of which are located in the vicinity of the Coast Defenses of the Chesapeake Bay.

The purchase, rather than the lease of this land, will be a saving for the Government, and I consider the terms to be reasonable.

Estimates will be submitted to Congress for the appropriation of this amount of money in order that your fund may be reimbursed.

Cordially yours,
Benedict Crowell,
Acting Secretary of War

This letter, dated Mar. 7, 1918, to President Woodrow Wilson, was a crucial step in the birth of what is today Fort Eustis.

Eustis as an artillery experimental shop, p. 4

ORIGINAL AUTHORIZATION

Memorandum to all Divisions:

March 19, 1918.

Authorization No. 86,

"CAMP ABRAHAM EUSTIS"

1. In accordance with the approval of the acting Secretary of War under date of March 7, 1918, through the Chief of Staff (copy of which is hereto attached), you are hereby authorized to proceed with the construction of

(A) A concentration camp to be located near Fort Monroe, Virginia, for the purpose of concentrating, organizing, equipping, training and embarking troops of the Coast Artillery Corps intended for duty abroad as Field Artillery, Railway Artillery, Trench Mortar Battery and Anti-Aircraft troops.

(B) Also the purchase of the necessary land for a camp site and for a target range.

2. This cantonment is to have a maximum capacity of 12,000 troops, and will be used jointly by the Signal Corps and the Coast Artillery Troops.

3. This construction work is to be done by the Construction Division from funds which have been submitted for inclusion in the Urgent Deficiency Bill now pending before Congress, while the funds for the purchase of the necessary land will be drawn from the Emergency Fund, "National Security and Defense."

4. The official name of this job will be:
"Camp Abraham Eustis"

The postoffice, telegraph, freight and express addresses will be issued at a later date.

C.C. Wright,
Major Quartermaster, N.A.*

* National Army



Historical series 3.1C - Mar 93 FT. EUSTIS HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Researched, written, and arranged by
Dick Ivy, Yorktown, and Director Ethel
MacKnight, Denbigh, and published by FEHAA. P.O. Box 4468,
Ft. Eustis, VA 23604. Updates the post's HIST 2B, Apr '82.

Building the camp & the Artillery presence

The U.S. entered the World War on April 6, 1917. First American Expeditionary Forces arrived in Europe June 25th. On Nov. 11, 1918, the Armistice was signed.

The suggestion that Artillerymen fire at targets on land which could not be observed from a gun position, much like it would be in combat in France, was made by French military advisors on duty at the Artillery School of Practice at Fort Monroe on Jan. 17, 1918. Mulberry Island was selected though it could only provide a range maximum of 7,000 yds., but it was a place that could be safe from intrusion and also bordered by water which could provide a shooting range over water.

In addition to the **5,672 acres** of Mulberry Island, another **1,721 acres** connecting to the island was bought. 115 acres later called **Camp Wallace** built in October 1918 now known as Kings Mill provided the 20,000 yd. range for firing long range artillery. The island would be the range, the latter for the camp. It soon became the site to organize, equip, train and embark troops of the Coast Artillery for duty in France. A third of the post, 588 acres, was used as the **Army Air Service Balloon Observation School**.

First construction period: Mar. 25 - Oct. 2, 1918.

Second construction period: Oct. 3 - June 1919.

Construction of a simple cantonment type camp designed for 12,000 troops was started even before former owners had moved out. The first ground was broken for an office building in April. On May 3, 1918, two units from Fort Monroe arrived and took the roles of military police and target trench digging.

By August 1918, quarters had been completed for more than 19,000 troops. The 61st Artillery Regimental Hq., and two of its batteries were the first troops to occupy barracks on June 7th. They raised the first flag on the post July 4, 1918.

For much of WWI, troops lived in tents. The office buildings were hastily constructed shacks. These barracks, begun in 1919, were standard Army barracks in which perhaps WWII soldiers later lived.

Where were these located? What road is that on the left? They were later identified as housing National Guard troops.



CAMP ABRAHAM EUSTIS was named for Brevet Brig. Gen. Abraham Eustis (b. Petersburg, Va., 1786, d. Portland, Me., 1843) was the first active commandant of the Artillery School of Practice and commander of Fort Monroe 10 years. His service spanned 35 yrs. Left, Eustis at age 51.

The greatest number of builders at Eustis was 6,293 on July 9, 1918. It was built for \$14 million.*

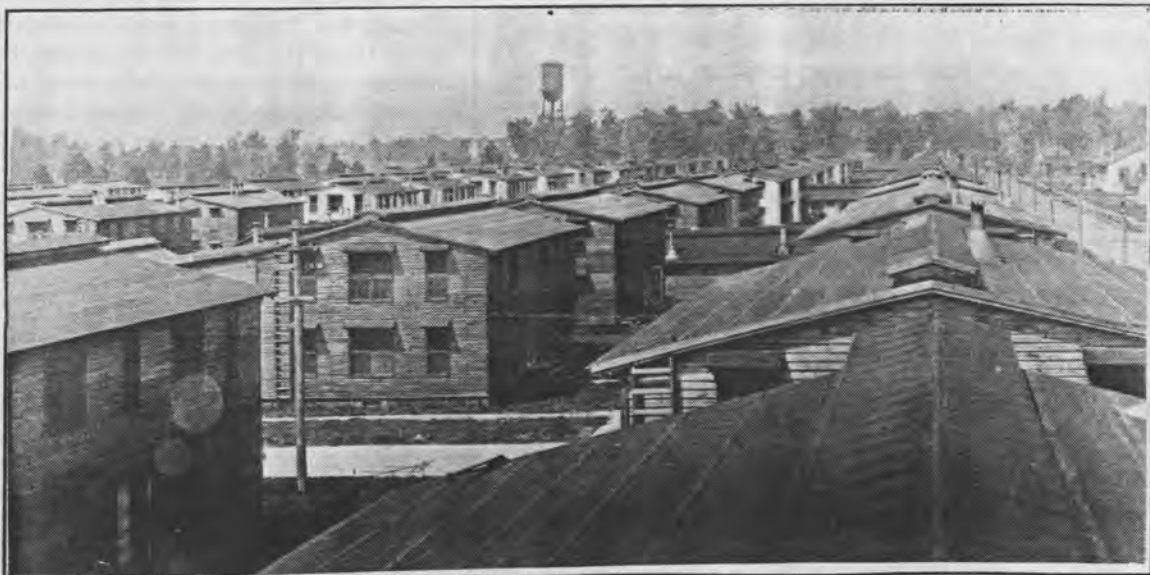
Three schools

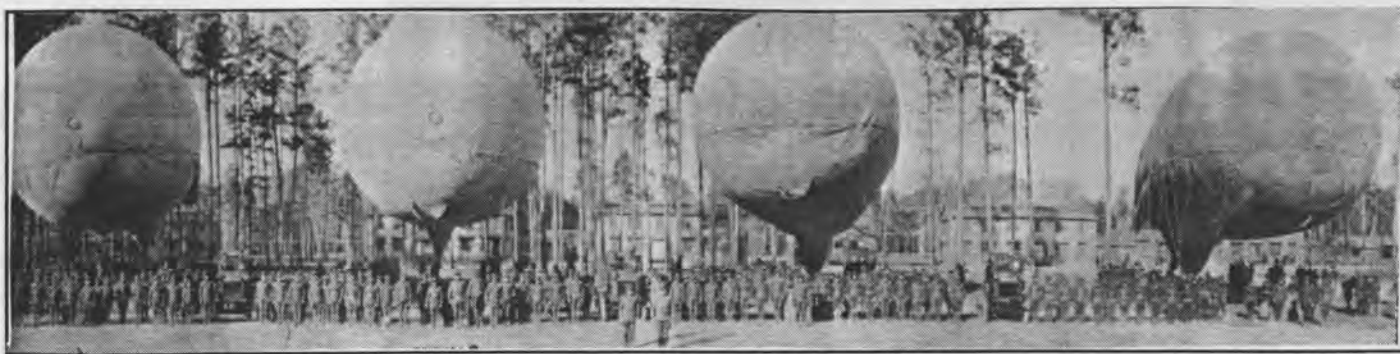
There were three schools: motor transport, trench mortar, and air balloon, as well as extensive artillery training. An extensive rail line was built. In 1923, it had 22 miles of track. Officers from Fort Monroe came to Eustis to fire large calibre guns similar to those being used in France, under simulated combat conditions on the 20,000 yd. range. Vibration from the firing shook the island.

Training was the paramount mission. 20,000 soldiers shipped to France from Eustis out of the Newport News Port of Embarkation. After the war, 13,000 arrived at Eustis for out-processing. Demobilized units at Eustis in December 1918 accounted for 33,000.

Brig. Gen. Sunderland lived in the remodeled house of William Lee's Big Oak Farm in the central post, although FEHAA has not been able to identify the lot on the 1918 engineer map. He was identified as being there in 1915 in an article about the camp in the Daily Press, March 26, 1987, and perhaps sold it before the 1918 map was drawn.

* Daily Press, Oct. 19, 1921. Cost was repeated several times.





Units from Ft. Monroe, arrival dates

Hq.Co. & A Btry, 2nd Trench Mortar Bn. May 3, 1918
 Btry C, 61st Arty May 19, '18; Btry D, 61st Arty May 26, '18
 Btry C, 52nd Arty Aug. 22, '19; Btry D, 52nd Arty Sep. 23, '19

UNITS AT CAMP EUSTIS. Departed for POE*

Coast Artillery Brigades: 30th, *37th, *38th, *41st, 42nd# & 43rd#.
 Coast Artillery Regiments: 27th#, 30th#, 31st#, 32nd#, 33rd#, 34th#,
 *36th, *37th, *38th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, *45th, *46th, *47th,
 *48th, *49th, *50th, 52nd, 53rd, *61st, 62nd, 64th, 69th.
 Coast Artillery Bns: 2nd Trench Mortar Bn.
 Ammunition trains: *4th Trench Mortar Bn., 56th#, 57th# Amm Tn.
 Anti-aircraft Bns: *4th & 8th.
 AA Btry: 9th, *13th, *14th, *15th#, *16th#, 17th#, 56th, 57th.
 Quartermaster Corps: 401st, 431st Service Bns.
 QM Construction companies: 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd.

Signal Corps: Army Balloon School.

Air Service Balloon Co's: 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 23rd, 26th, 27th,
 28th, 29th, 30th, 32nd, 33rd, 41st, 70th, 71st, 91st, 92nd.

* Units left for Newport News POE. Info from Lt. Col. Fred M. Green, "Coast Artillery Training in the War" in *The Journal of the U.S. Artillery*. Units left from July thru Nov. 1918, had few or no months in the war. Demobilized in Dec. 1918. #. Green's record only covers between June and Dec. 1918.

WWI Commanders of Camp Eustis

1 Apr '18 - Col (BG) Frank K. Ferguson

18 Nov. '18 - Col. Edward J. Timberlake.

10 Dec '18 - June '19 - BG Archibald H. Sunderland

Jun '19 - Sept '19 - Col. James D. Watson



The 1500-seat Liberty Theatre was dedicated on Washington's Birthday, Feb. 22, 1919. A large crowd was present for the gala event, but the projector didn't work. A speaker walked center stage and said, "This building is hereby dedicated" and everybody left. The movie was postponed.

The Army Air Service Balloon Observation School (also known as the Lee Hall . . .) of the Signal Corps cost about \$1,500,000 to establish. Student capacity was 1,442. Companies were formed for service overseas. Co-locating at Fort Eustis with the Artillery provided an opportunity for cooperation with artillery firing, particularly for the new heavy railway guns. Often, during heavy firing schedules, as many as seven balloons were aloft. It was one of three like schools in the Army, but the Eustis one was unique in training in both land and water observation.

Mulberry Island Pier

Construction of a Mulberry Island Pier was begun Aug. 8, 1918. It was 3,400 ft. into the James River with an elevation floor of 9.5 ft. above mean sea level. A rail spur went over the pier to a warehouse at its end. The original idea was to use it as an embarkation point (Trell's Landing) for artillery troops going overseas. Today it is the Maritime Commission Pier of the James River Reserve Fleet. On Apr. 20, 1919, the first boat docked there to take 250 troops from Regimental "G" Hq. on maneuvers.

Coast Artillery Training Ctr. May 1918 - June 1919

Unfinished camp hospital opened Sep. 16, 1918

Anti-aircraft Artillery School, est. Sep. 19, 1918



The post was commanded from this building (top). The Hostess House, forerunner of today's guest houses, also housed nurses and teachers, was built in 1918. Virginia M. Burcher of Newport News remembers the social affairs director was Mabel Marsh.

Eustis experimental shop of the Coast Artillery

Anti-aircraft, tractor howitzers, railway guns

Men of the 54th CA Replacement Regt. from Eustis manned guns to protect the Expeditionary Force and Gen. Pershing's headquarters at Chaumont, France, and turned back German bombers day and night.

In 1918, one battalion and four companies were working the complex anti-aircraft training mission. It required personnel smart in mathematics to figure trajectory and target acquisition. The results later in France were beyond expectation. For every 8,000 shots, one plane was downed. One AAA battery recorded 17 planes shot down.

Camp Abraham Eustis was known as the "experimental shop of the Coast Artillery Corps." One of the experiments resulted in the post-war retention of the 52nd CA Regt. as an Artillery Railway Regt. Large guns were moved from place to place on specially fitted railcars.

In 1919, a new and sensational weapon, the tractor-mounted 8-inch howitzer, was tried at Eustis. It could go where rail couldn't. It gave birth to the 51st Coast Artillery Regt. (Tractor).

Camp Wallace gave gunners the 20,000 yd. range

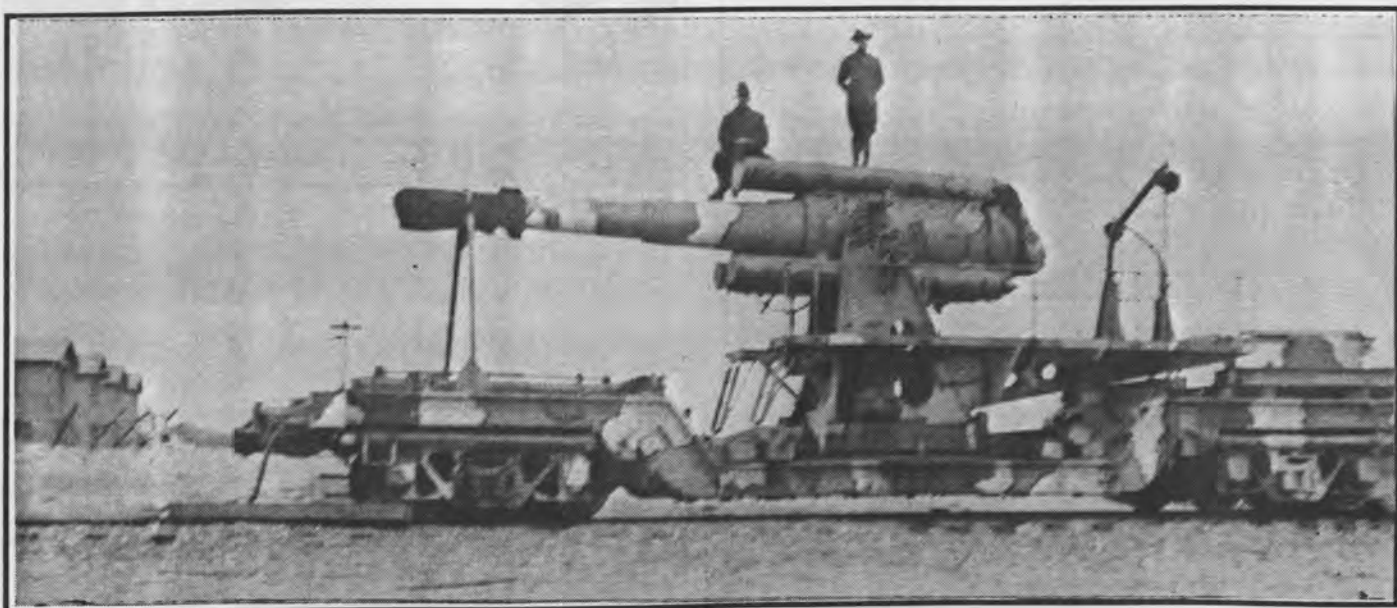
Camp Wallace (now part of Busch Properties) was bought because the firing range at Eustis wasn't long enough. Construction began in **October 1918** and was completed in June 1919. It had 30 66-man barracks, 6 storehouses, 8 mess halls, sewage, electricity, and a water system. It would provide the **20,000 yd. range** artillerists wanted. For this reason, it was also known as the Upper Firing Point. Railway Artillery units would go there by a spur track off the C&O mainline, and spend 7-10 days firing downrange 5 miles over water to targets on Mulberry Island. There was a large steel tower erected in the old Civil War Fort Crafford to observe where rounds fell.

It was named for Col. Elmer J. Wallace, an Artillery commander, killed in France.

Congress voted to abandon Camp Eustis after the Armistice, raising a very loud objection from local and state politicians and War Department officials. Camp Eustis was to have an extended life, however, to capitalize on the lessons learned in France, and Eustis became a fort but that's another story, a story of an existence that would only last another ten years, the fort closing in the midst of the Great Depression.



Top to btm, field artillery training at Camp Eustis. Troops going somewhere. 8" gun on rail cars at Camp Eustis, photo courtesy of the Casemate Museum, Fort Monroe.



Behind this gate '34-'37

Entrance to
Ft. Eustis
c. 1925. Notice the
church between the
gate and the building.



Camp Abraham Eustis opened in 1918 to quarter and train Artillerymen for WWI's European battle-fronts. It became a "permanent" fort in 1923, but was abandoned in 1931 during the depression and isolationist disregard for a defense establishment. It became a Federal prison for prohibition offenders, but the Prohibition Act was repealed in 1933 and the post again had caretaker residents. Its role for the next two years, 1934 through 1936, was to contribute to the national recovery as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's often challenged and daring programs.

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) was established in May 1933 for the relief of the unemployed in the U.S. and was administered through state FERA offices disbursing nearly \$4 billion in the next two years. In June 1934, there were transient camps at Roanoke, Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Staunton, Bristol, Richmond, Danville, Norfolk and Fredericksburg under the Virginia office.

As early as June 1934, state FERA officials became interested in taking over the prison camp shops formerly operated by the Justice Department to train men from Virginia, District of Columbia, Maryland and Delaware in marketable skills. There was concern at the State Health Commission about so many men arriving at the camp at the same time, and ordered them to be move in companies of 60 men.

The state FERA officials inspected Eustis in early Oct. 1934 to establish the regional camp and were delighted at what they found. It was transferred from the Dept. of Justice to the FERA by agreement on Oct. 15. The first detachment of men, more than 300, had arrived Oct. 6. It was a unique training ground, the

Federal Emergency Relief Administration's Ft. Eustis Transient Rehabilitation & Works Progress Administration Camps 1934-1937

only regional camp in the U.S., the last one to be established and most often listed last and on a separate line in national reports rather than under Virginia. Paul B. Murphy, previously in transient work in Arizona, was the camp director. An Associated Press story, datelined Richmond:

The Eustis rehabilitation camp was established as a unit separate from the several other camps in various parts of Virginia, and was intended to draw men from a region embracing several neighboring states.

FERA gave Camp Eustis a \$40,000 grant for October and \$60,000 for November. There was a director's office, (eventually) departments for engineering, social service, medical, recreation, a commissary (mess halls) and repairs and maintenance, all



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housed in WWI buildings near the present WPA Cemetery. The headquarters and barracks were in the area between Hopkins Ave. (West Lee Blvd.) and Wallace Ave. (Patton Ave). The headquarters looked like Bldg. 1709.

The institutional equipment including that for a cannery and the paint shop cost \$18,958. Camp industries included a bakery (bread was sold in the community. In April 1935, bread sales were \$1,621), steam plant, farm industries which had the largest slice of the budget with a return of \$267 worth of eggs and \$155.82 in milk, blacksmith shop, telephone department, laundry, garage for vehicle repair with the second largest industry cost, salvage department, ice and cold storage plants, clothing factory, railroad and shoe repair shop. They also canned and sold sauerkraut. Several ships in the James River belonging to the Shipping Board Steel Fleet were to be salvaged by FERA men.

Discipline at the camp

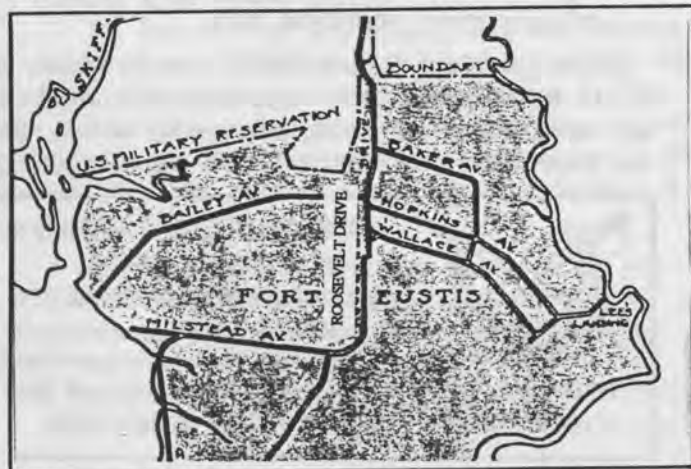
In December 1934, there was an enrollment of 1,556 at the camp. The population had grown to 2,500 men by Feb. 7, 1935, 400 of them Negroes. In the census taken Apr. 15, there were 2,397 men. Designed for a maximum population of 3,000, a grant of an additional \$75,000 for operation was based on it jumping to 3,700 in September. By 1936, the WPA population was "not less than 4,000."

As the population of the FERA camp grew, so did the problems. The judge of the Grand Jury proclaimed in February 1935, that "lawlessness at the Regional ERA camp has become so prevalent that a company of marines is needed there." Fourteen "outside" bootleggers had been caught trading booze for clothing of the camp workers, and Murphy initiated prosecution against them. The Grand Jury and the Press was insisting the problems came from within the camp. Nearby residents of the camp were not at all happy with the great number of men at Eustis.

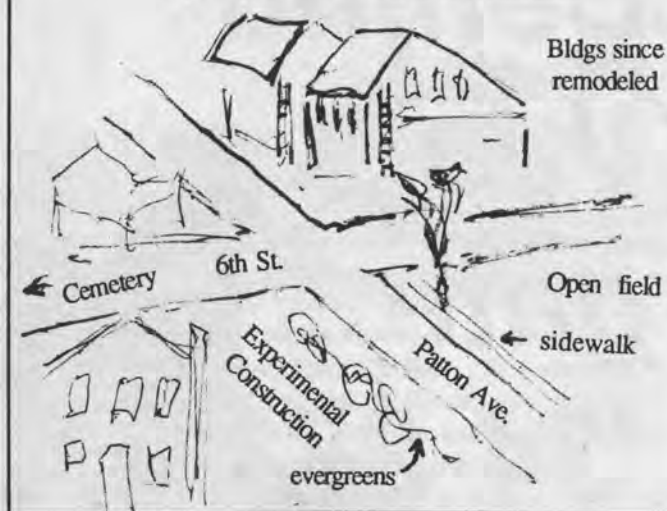
Camp officials kept a close watch on the men, and state and national officials stopped by for visits. There were cases of drunkenness, petty thievery, fighting and general mischievousness, perhaps not unusual for the community of 2,000 men. The camp didn't have to accept everyone sent, and didn't. The record shows one man was referred to the state for disposition because he didn't work. No work, no pay, was the reason given. They also shipped a "psychotic" and several undesirables back to the states they came from, one letter showed.

Spinal meningitis epidemic

The camp increased WWT's Grace Hospital to 60 beds and tried to get more doctors. In March 1935, the hospital became a separate entity from a staff responsibility. Dr. W. I. Prichard



Sketch from photo in files in official D.C. files imposed on the Fort Eustis street location



was the medical director, succeeded by Dr. V. J. Cox. The branch hospital at "Little Eustis" in North Carolina was Dr. F. N. Gibson. The week ending Apr. 22, the camp had nine cases of syphilis. In June, it was 29 cases of syphilis and 11 cases of gonorrhea. The most serious disease, however, was spinal meningitis. Three men had died, according to a Feb. 7 report which also announced a strict quarantine. The State Health Commission made some recommendations to reduce the epidemic. Among them, companies being strictly limited to 60 men, and not more than 20 men in any one living compartment. The quarantine was lifted Feb. 8. On Mar. 16 there was a new case. A second outbreak occurred in May, with four deaths, one dying May 3 named J. Lynch, #3024 (all men in the program had a serial number). The bodies of most who died were shipped to the next of kin at the homes of record. Those with no homes of record were buried or reburied in what has been since become known as the WPA Cemetery at Fort Eustis (see Fact Sheet on cemeteries) in two fenced cemeteries (one for Negroes with 11 stones) containing 24 flat engraved stones among the tall trees on a bluff overlooking the Warwick River. The camp was only under a partial (workers restricted) quarantine. The meningitis epidemic was also experienced at other transient camps, officials at the time wrote.

Everything wasn't perfect at the camp. One worker, Frank G. Lewis, was at least one who wrote to FERA headquarters in Washington D.C., calling for an investigation of the camp, saying the staff has a "click," and the "men get the dirty end." The letter was returned to the camp director for action. Some writers complained that they couldn't go offpost because of the quarantine, but commercial individuals could come and go without anyone's concern.

A model camp

Eustis was given the task of developing a "dismountable" prefabricated building and a model transient camp in June. State assistant staff engineer E. C. Crocker came to Eustis to supervise development of an ideal transient camp and the plans for construction of housing that could be shipped and erected at other locations. Two such buildings were constructed here, 20x44 ft. and 20x12 ft. The octagonal model would cost \$19,066, the other \$16,942. The blueprints were detailed down to the bolts and nails required. One configuration showed the barracks and living area

in an octagonal shaped area with the headquarters building in the center and the ten barracks radiating at angles on the back side of the headquarters. Behind the barracks at the apex was the dispensary. Behind the headquarters on the area access road were two dining room buildings separated by a kitchen. The garage was near and across from a large athletic field. Shower buildings would be located on each side of the headquarters building. On the right was a large auditorium, two classrooms, a canteen and a library.

FERA personnel lived in practically new WWI barracks or in barracks constructed on barges. Since FERA and the camp was short lived, no list of buildings used or maps were made of it in 1935. Officials came to Eustis to inspect the camp and the experimental sectional buildings nearing completion on June 7-8, and determined the cost of materials and amount of labor was "at present too high." Crocker had also suggested the prefab sections were "not suitable for shipment," and recommended to "leave the buildings where they are."

The inspectors reported on shop activity: the carpenter shop was planing timbers received from the sawmill; the cot shop was making standard boxlocker cots; the mattress shop was making pads for the S.S. Kittery, and the clothing shop was making blue denim work pants. The bakery needed screen repairs at once to prevent the swarm of flies within. A Negro farm camp, hastily constructed, needed improvements, and the potato fields they farmed were "not very good." Inspectors noted that dormitories and other facilities were being remodeled in one area.

"A building constructed in 1720 is now being repaired for staff members' residence. It might make a good restoration project," the report read. An added comment was a necessity of providing a comprehensive plan for camp development. Still pertinent since a Jan. 11 letter was the need for organization of an Engineer and Works Dept.

Other activities

Eventually, there were two theatres on post, one which was **Liberty Theatre**, from WWI days. A hostess recreation center was begun in February 1935, eventually needing two buildings. A Ft. Eustis Male Chorus was organized as was a string orchestra and a band. **Gene Gorman**, a musician of 26 years, had accepted the challenge of getting the orchestra to sound good. According to reports, he was tough, but after the first public performance in Saluda in the last week of April 1936, they had no shortage of requests to play in the communities. In the education area, elementary English was taught to FERA men among other topics. The workers loved baseball and Eustis had an impressive looking stadium. The team was hailed as a leading team in Tidewater. For the first half of the 1936 season (over in July), Eustis had won 31, lost 9. The post engineer was also the commander of an American Legion post at Eustis. It was an active and large post, and they built the flagpole in front of the Eustis headquarters.

Internal information

The post's first publication was a mimeographed 18-page magazine with the dateline Nov. 3, 1934. **Sacco Nenoff**, who was to become the post librarian, was its editor. In a contest to name the camp newspaper, **Earl H. Dean** named it **Transient City**. A mimeographed weekly news magazine, the first issue appeared Dec. 4, and continued 'til May. With the print shop functional, **Transient City News** first appeared printed twice a week on May 28, 1935. It eventually was eight pages. On Nov. 18, it changed its name to **Ft. Eustis News** to coincide with the

mission change to WPA. Desiring a more detailed report of events, the post published three monthly magazines called **Atalantis**, loaded with history of the area as well as activities of the Eustis industries. It was paid for by recreation funds. In the July 1936 issue, they announced its end: "probable that all activities will be transferred to North Carolina." The **Atalantis** was a valuable source of information about the camp. It published photos and a map of the roads at that time, to help us pinpoint the FERA-WPA buildings.



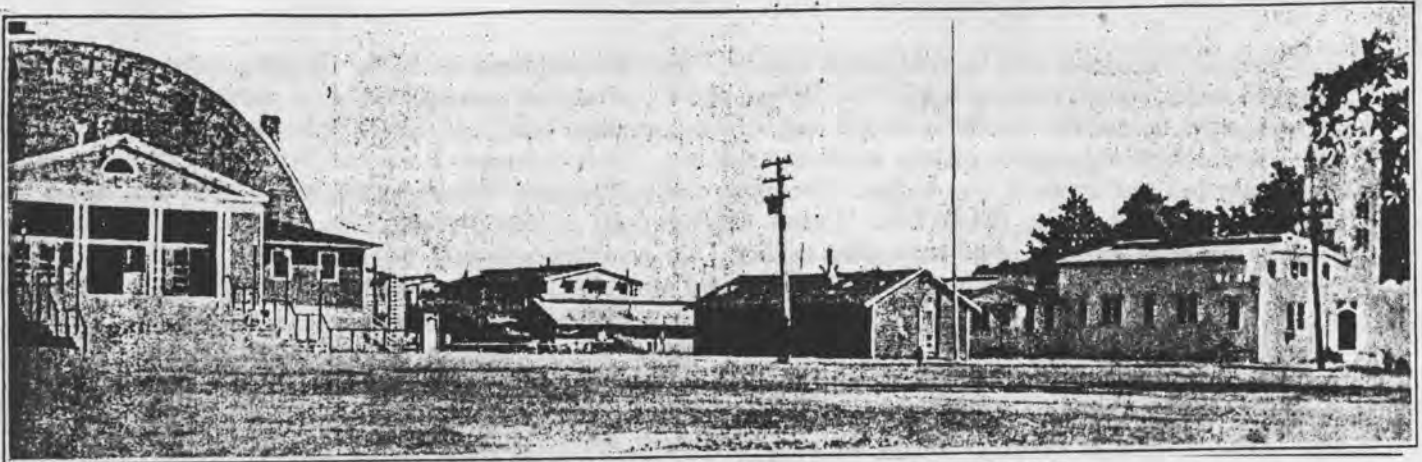
Ships and operations

Perhaps yielding to pressure of citizens of Denbigh and Lee Hall, a patrol was organized for discipline of the men by the men in May. The camp was criticized by FERA for having too high a food cost. In April, it was 34 cents per man per day, whereas the country average was 26 cents.

The audit finally came on May 3, and other than eight recommendations mostly concerning administration, the inspectors were glad to note "With the few above exceptions, the camp is apparently functioning on a most efficient basis."

A project Paul Murphy had been working on was the free acquisition of the U.S. Lines S.S. **Leviathan** for use as housing and work for about 2,000 men 40 years or older, first planned for the James River and later for Yorktown "harbor." The ship was 450 ft. long and 100 ft. wide. Though approved, there's no record that it ever happened.

Former U.S. Navy transport S.S. **Kittery** was assigned May 1935 from the State Bureau of Fisheries to Fort Eustis as a "mother ship" for the post fleet which included the M. S. **Pasteur**, a 40 ft. gig and a 35' speed boat, life boats and some skiffs as well as three barracks barges. With the **Kittery**, the **Transient Retraining Camp** took over the state's mission of oyster pest control project in regional waters. The **Kittery** was commanded by **Capt. William Haynes**, who was also in charge of the "Eustian fleet." In mid-July, the ship with almost 100 living aboard was at "Wachopregue" Inlet. The state was answering the Shipping Board about its whereabouts July 18 for its return. They had heard it was "aground on the south side of Onancock Creek." (lower Eastern Shore). It had "blown up" aground many times caused by "unseasonable gales." With but one operating boiler, there was "great difficulty to dislodge the 40 ft. beam." Murphy told them he would take immediate steps to return it. The 232-foot cargo carrier **Kittery** was retired to the Steel Fleet a while before the WPA closed.



Liberty Theatre and WPA buildings (from the July 1936 "Atalan tis"). Looks like a chupel on the right.

Two Eustis persons Bill Reece and Paul Manker had reopened the amateur radio station and was using call sign "Station WUD" or "WUDF" assigned to the Army. Complaints from radio stations and other communication systems in the area being cut by WUD's broadcast in a very high frequency brought a national investigation in October. If the station, which Murphy used for communication and troop entertainment, is to continue, the letter said, the operators must get licenses, and the frequency and power to be used, approved.

WPA — New name and mission, same camp

On Nov. 15, 1935, the FERA camp, nationally considered only as an interim measure to help solve the nation's economic ills, closed its operation. The men assembled in Plunkert Plaza in front of Liberty Theater Nov. 22 and Murphy told them standing on the back end of a truck. Nov. 26 was the official beginning as a camp of the Works Progress (later Projects) Administration, an organization devoted to construction of many large scale public projects to help the local economy by offering jobs to needy citizens. The warrant for the Ft. Eustis facility, designed to house 5,023 WPA workers, was officially signed Nov. 7. By January, all FERA camps in the country had converted to WPA.

The projects listed for the Eustis workers on the December 11 report were: mosquito eradication in 900 acres of swamp on Mulberry Island, construction of a Macadam highway called the River Road (Harrison Road) leading to "Shipping Board Steel Fleet anchored in James River." It was built with about 100 "Coloreds." The other road, using ballast from abandoned rail spurs, was the Middle Island Road (Mulberry Island Road). Both were supervised by Jim Berry of the engineering department. In May, the report added Eustis Airport, Newport News Waterworks, the wind tunnel reservation at Langley Field, and North Carolina beach erosion projects.

The men were kept busy in sports, news that comprised the largest portion of "Ft. Eustis News," a printed four page "news-letter" edited by George Bartley (Issue #17, June 2, 1936).

The WPA set their estimated completion date for July 1, 1936, but the official closing date wasn't until August 1. Elizabeth Wickenden, the assistant to the deputy administrator at the Virginia WPA office, wrote:

Because of certain complications inherent in this project, which can only be understood in the light of its history, I believe it would be well to retain responsibility for its liquidation in the office.

It was still listed as being active on Aug. 1, though correspondence that day indicated the men had been transferred to other

camps in Virginia and North Carolina. WPA employees were required to work 30 hours on the job and received \$62.50 a month, \$42.50 of it being paid from state allocated WPA grants, \$20 coming from the state funds.

Two Colored workers drowned at Manteo, N.C., Sept. 18, 1936, as a result of the hurricane which brought 75 m.p.h. winds to the Peninsula, and a "tomado" at Virginia Beach. They were both buried the same day, October 7th. The Times-Herald listed WPA workers, Red Cross and National Guard personnel aiding in rescue work on the Peninsula, while looking for three Negro WPA workers listed as missing near Coinjock, N.C., where they were working in conservation projects on the beaches.

The reduced scale of WPA work was announced Sept. 18. On Sept. 24, the local press reported \$22,000 allocated to Fort Eustis for Peninsula WPA projects, \$19,000 of which was "for setting up transient camps in lieu of direct relief." Tents had been acquired for field quartering at the work sites.

There were several large orders placed for tents in July. There was no mention in WPA letters, Atalantis or other reports of a supposed fire in 1936 at Eustis.

The final days

On Oct. 1, 1936, the staff and workers were so few, that 40 men from the State Farm were also living there, harvesting and processing the crops and assisting in "dressing up and conditioning the property." Wickenden wrote, "If the post is not used by the WPA, Justice or the State, Langley (Field) will use it." On Oct. 19, she also replied to a query from Virginia Representative Schuyler O. Bland, chairman of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries (evidently concerned about the shipping board and the post's use):

We have recently received permission from the Department of Justice Bureau of Prisons to continue our jurisdiction over this property in its present status for at least an additional six months.

Wickenden sent the last official document in the records on Eustis on Dec. 1, 1936:

Fort Eustis camp has, to all intents and purposes, been discontinued as a transient camp, only a small maintenance staff being retained there.

Details compiled were from a multitude of FERA and WPA records at The National Archives, Washington, D.C., local newspaper files of the Daily Press/Times-Herald of 1936 reviewed by the author in 1985 and 1986, and from Ft. Eustis camp periodical files of the West Avenue branch of the Newport News library.

Mulberry Island Cemeteries



Although there was a church established on the island by 1627, Mulberry Island families frequently had their own burial grounds. In 1918, when the Army obtained the land, it offered assistance and gave the families on the island 30 days in which to relocate their dead from existing plots. Some of them did so, with reburials taking place at Lebanon Church Cemetery in Lee Hall (see photo, p. 3) and in other nearby cemeteries.

In the agricultural economy of the 1610-1918 era, tombstones and grave markers were expensive and difficult to move into remote areas such as Mulberry Island. Consequently, most graves were marked, if at all, with wooden headboards or crosses which did not survive the passage of time. Some graves were marked by planting flowers or trees at the their head or foot, or both. Frequently, still thriving periwinkle planted for remembrance marks an early grave site.

There are nine definitely known family plots where burials took place prior to 1918 when the U.S. Army obtained the property, [families having 30 days to remove graves and stones and markers if they wished, so the story goes]. There were actually about 13 cemeteries with one outside the gate of Ft. Eustis, eight of them family ones.



Historical Series 4.2A, Nov. '92 FT. EUSTIS HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

From a paper researched and written by the late Col. (AUS, Ret) Jean M. Gray, member of FEHAA. Added information in brackets by Col. (USA, Ret.) John Curry, director, Colonial Era History Group. Edited and arranged by Dick Ivy and published by FEHAA, P.O. Box 4468, Ft. Eustis, VA 23604. Information may be used with credit to FEHAA and appropriate authors. Comments or supported corrections welcome. Other issues available by subscription.

FERA-WPA Cemetery plots page 4

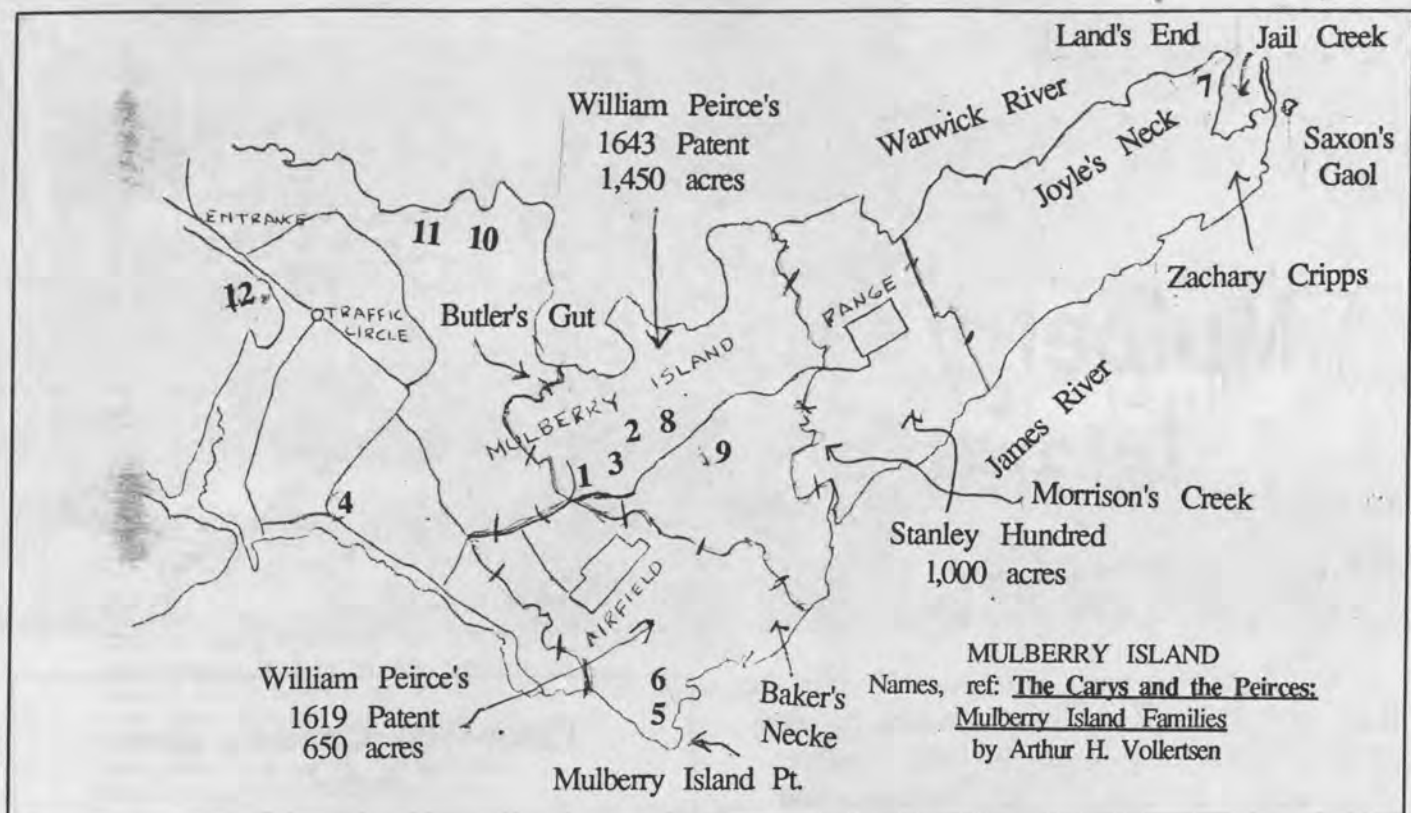
Carter Crafford Family - Site #1: Located a few feet from the golf course maintenance road and adjacent to and southwest of the course maintenance shop. It contained 24 graves. Eight were members of the Crafford family; ten others were members of the Adams, Nettles and Smith families. The remaining six were unidentified. Earliest interment was in 1881.

Curtis Family - Site #2: Situated on the present golf course near the fir tree about 480 ft. east of Mulberry Island Rd. It contained 17 graves. Only six were Curtises, so it presumably took its name from the landowner Dr. H. H. Curtis, largest landowner on Mulberry Island at the time of the War Between the States and who organized and commanded the Warwick Beauregards, an infantry company from Warwick Co. Dr. Curtis was the father of Simon Curtis, long active politically in Warwick and was its treasurer from 1900 to 1944. Other graves in the plot included nine members of the Miner family, two of the Wright family, one Wells, and one Smith, all probably related by marriage.

Crafford Family Slaves - Site #3: Located 60 yards from Mulberry Island Rd. on the Golf Course and near the Carter Crafford family plot, containing 50 unidentified Negro graves. The cemetery was probably established before the Civil War and continued in use after the war. No headstones or markers have been found to identify anyone in this or those in the Curtis and other Crafford cemeteries. Exact sites were destroyed in the construction of the golf course.

Jones House - Site #4: The oldest graveyard known to exist on Mulberry Island was located near the Matthew Jones

More inside



House. The property was owned by Emmett W. Milstead when acquired by the Army in 1918. It has changed hands many times over the years — the Joneses, Greens, [Woods], Fitchetts and Webbs lived there in the 19th Century, and the graveyard was used by all of these families [the Webbs also in mid-1700s. Tabb Fitchett bought house from Henry Francis Jones in 1823. Col. Thomas Tabb bought it in 1883] After World War I, the cemetery was destroyed by the construction of the River Road [ed: by the WPA] and the railroads. There are no records of how many graves were located there. It is probable, however, that the first burials were in the 17th Century. Perhaps local families might have such records.

Crafford Family, Fort Crafford - Site #5: Located about 50 yards east of the house foundation in the center of Fort Crafford just off the present road. There were never any tombstones at the site, according to a statement in 1937 by Lucy Crafford, a life long resident of Mulberry Island. Those graves not destroyed by the construction of a large artillery battery located there during the Civil War are grown over by honeysuckle, underbrush and trees. It is quite likely that any members of the fort garrison who died in 1861-62 may also have been buried in or near this plot. [John Curry says no, those volunteers who were killed aboard the Patrick Henry in the Battle of Hampton Roads are buried on Jamestown Island. Lt. James Waddel, Charles City Southern Guard, who drowned in the James River, was buried in Charles City.]

Crafford Family Slaves, Fort Crafford - Site #6: Like the family graves, the number and exact location of the graves is not known. The gravesite was located about 100 yards southeast of the family plot, and none of the graves were covered by construction of the Fort Crafford battery. There are records of the births and deaths of some of the slaves in the old Crafford family Bible.

Fitchett Family - Site #7: It's in the old garden of the "Waterview" home which is located at the extreme end of Mulberry Island. There are some old trees around the nine-grave site. None of these graves were marked, or, if they were, the headstones have been removed. The graves are now overgrown with underbrush and honeysuckle vines, making them difficult to locate.

Nettles Family - Site #8: This was a large family which owned various plots of land on Mulberry Island. The cemetery is located at just east of Mulberry Island Rd., adjacent to the test-area railroad spur, and has since been leveled. There is no information available as to how many graves were at this site, or when it was used.

Mulberry Island Cemetery Club - Site #9: This one-acre plot was located a short distance beyond the Crafford Family Slave cemetery, a few hundred yards on the opposite side of the road. There is no record of the interments there, but it was a privately-owned plot, in which the families of the members of the club were buried. [A plot sold for about \$5, less for infants but no sure price was found.] It is shown on an Army map dated in 1919. [Most of the remains were removed for reburial elsewhere after the sale of the island. A few surviving residents of the island maintain that there were several unmarked graves which were left intact there.]

Transient Worker's Cemetery - Sites 10 & 11 (See p. 4 for details). Graves maintained by the military post.

1660 Church, Site 12: Located at a former church site of the Anglican Church, on the Old Warwick County Rd., just off Ft. Eustis. The last known White burial was a member of the Southall family in 1820. The church was turned over to the Negro inhabitants who used it for worship until about 1920. The earliest tombstones indicate burials in the 1870s.

First black minister, Thomas Wright, buried at Site #12

by John Curry

On Site #12, the reference to the 1660 church may be in error. Several documents I read referred to the church built by Capt. William Peirce at Baker's Neck. I think the church site at 12 is the Colonial church and have support in this contention as this church was also referred to as "The Mulberry Island Chapel". One of the main users was a Methodist group which quit holding services there when they moved to a new church on Hoopes Rd. and is now called The Warwick Memorial United Methodist Church. After they moved, it became a Negro church.

A grave with a headstone (right) Rev. Thomas D. Wright, Died Aug 4, 1891. Age 70 the first colored man that was ordained minister of Gospel in Warwick County and first to establish Colored free school in said county, the first to raise a colored resident lawyer.

There were four stones near the grave, "LAW" "TGW" and "WCMM".

Nearby is another grave bearing the headstone of Samuel Armfield, Nov. 19, 1910 - Sept. 20, 1980. Records show that the Armfield family owned the land fronting on the road behind the Greyhound Station, land on which the Oakland Dairy was located, now known as the Oakland Industrial Site. Archaeologist Nick Luccketi found some graves, including Thomas Harwood's 1657 grave at Queen's Hith.

Saxon's Gaol - possible graves, Site 13

A 1923 report filed at Fort Eustis recounts the findings of a group of soldiers on maneuvers at the tip of Mulberry Island. The report stated that when the soldiers began digging in they uncovered skeletal human remains in an advanced state of decomposition. From the location it could be and the reference of shallow graves, this could be a burial site of prisoners who languished in Saxon's Gaol. Popular belief is that this served as the debtors prison also.



The 2' high gravestone of the Rev. Thomas Wright, surrounded by periwinkle on the road behind the bus station about a half mile southwest. The L.A.W. stone is on the right.



A row of marble Miner headstones moved to the cemetery of the Lebanon Church of Christ, on Yorktown Rd in 1918. Remains were not moved, according to the late Lucy Crafford. Believed to be from the Miner cemeteries, also known as the Cemetery Club (#9 on the map, actually two plots between and on the former properties of T.G. Miner and H. C. Miner). Left to right, Ann Eliza Miner, daughter of S.H. ; Sam'l Carter Miner, son of W.C. & Mary, d. 1896; Sarah Langley Harrell, wife of Sam'l H. Miner, d. 1888; Sam'l Hyde Miner (Cpl. 32d Va., CSA), son of S.H. & S.L., d. 1866; Sam'l Hyde Miner, son of Christopher & Matilda, d. 1843; and Wm. C. Miner (ILT, 32nd VA Inf. CSA), son of S. H. & Sarah C., husband of Mary Crafford, d. Dec. 25, 1914 at 76. Lebanon minister Rev. Joe Parrish says the marble stones which darken in time, were cleaned about five years ago. The stones are about 3' except that of Ann's (2') (photos by Ivy)

If you have additional information or photos (will be returned) on any of the 13 sites or those who were buried there, contact us please.

Some civilians were buried at Fort Eustis



Deaths at Fort Eustis FERA & WPA Camps of those buried in chronological order

FERA workers

Thomas Moore, 56, d. Dec. 25, 1934, burial 30th. d. Warwick Co. Jail.
 William B. Harding, 59, d. Jan. 29, 1935, burial Mar. 10, d. Riverside Hosp.
 Edward Anderson, 20, d. Jan. 30, 1935, burial Mar. 10.
 Edward O. Neil, 57, d. Mar. 3, 1935, burial Mar. 10. k. on Hwy 60 in Warwick
 *Lewis Towns, 25, d. Mar. 15, 1935, burial 17th.
 Phillip Killen, 60, d. Mar. 17, 1935, burial 22nd.
 *James Stokes, 54, d. June 15, 1935, burial 19th.
 *Frank Duly, 43, d. July 12, 1935, burial 19th.
 Lee James, 25, d. Sept. 23, 1935, burial 29th. k. by C&O train near Lee Hall.

WPA workers

Joseph Norman, 59, d. Dec. 31, 1935, burial Jan. 12.
 William E. Simmons, 68, d. Jan. 3, 1936, burial 12th.
 *George J. Findley, 24, d. Jan. 8, 1936, burial 14th.
 Robert Ladon, 42, d. Jan. 23, 1936, burial Feb. 21.
 *William Gaskin, 35, d. Feb. 10, 1936, burial 26th.
 James W. Rose, 29, d. Apr. 4, 1936, burial 18th.
 Oakley R. Reynolds, 49, d. Apr. 21, 1936, burial 26th.
 *Lee McCann, 28, d. May 6, 1936, burial 13th.
 Frank J. Toley, 54, d. June 17, 1936, burial 23rd, dropped dead at Fort Eustis.
 Clyde Trissue, 36, d. June 27, 1936, burial July 2.
 *John Benjamin, 25, d. July 25, 1936, burial Aug. 12, drowned at Manteo, N.C.
 *John Lambright, 24, Sept. 18, 1936, burial Oct. 7, drowned at Manteo during storm.
 *Joe Lea, 32, d. Sept. 18, 1936, burial Oct. 7, drowned at Manteo during storm.
 *Unmarked grave
 *Unmarked grave
 * Negro. + Unless otherwise noted, all died at Grace Hospital, Ft. Eustis.



UNMARKED STONE

UNMARKED STONE

JOE LEA
 Age 32
 d. Sept. 18, 1936

GEORGE FINDLEY
 Age —
 d. 1936

JOHN BENJAMIN
 Age 25
 d. July 25, 1936

JOHN LAMBRIGHT
 Age 24
 d. Sept. 18, 1936

FRANK DULY
 Age 43
 d. July 12, 1935

JAMES STOKES
 Age 54
 d. June 15, 1935

WILLIAM GASKIN
 Age 35
 d. Feb. 10, 1936

LEWIS TOWNS
 Age 25
 d. March 13, 1935

LEE McCANN
 Age 28
 d. May 6, 1936

Plot #1

Plot #1 of the WPA Cemetery. John Benjamin's marker is front. Photos by Ivy.



CLYDE TRISSUE
 Age 36
 d. June 27, 1936

ROBERT LADON
 Age 42
 d. Jan. 23, 1936

JAMES W. ROSE
 Age 29
 d. Apr. 4, 1936

FRANK J. TOLEY
 Age 54
 d. June 17, 1936

OAKLEY R. REYNOLDS
 Age 49
 d. Apr. 21, 1936

THOMAS MOORE
 Age 56
 d. Dec. 25, 1934

LEE JAMES
 Age 25
 d. Sept. 23, 1935

JOSEPH NORMAN
 Age 59
 d. Dec. 31, 1935

WILLIAM B. HARDING
 Age 59
 d. Jan. 29, 1935

Plot #2

PHILLIP KILLEN
 Age 60
 d. Mar. 17, 1935

EDWARD O. NEIL
 Age 57
 d. Mar. 3, 1935

WILLIAM E. SIMMONS
 Age 68
 d. Jan. 3, 1936

EDWARD ANDERSON
 Age 20
 d. Jan. 30, 1935



NYA: Learning a trade: 1935-1936

The National Youth Administration (NYA) conducted classes and hands-on training concurrent with Federal Emergency Relief and Works Project Administrations and left when the WPA closed operations at Fort Eustis. "Youth" were trained in various trades such as sheet metal, auto mechanics, electrical, interior decorating, painting, carpentry, probably using the equipment and buildings established by FERA earlier.

First, not all students were young. Secondly, not all training led to jobs, since many applied for each job available in the community. But it was another way the government could subsidize individuals during a time of recovery from the Depression of the early 30s. Each county or city could select two youths for each class, done by the politicians. Students would be housed in barracks on post, have 3 meals a day, and receive \$10 a month. Many families in society subsisted on close to that.

The NYA sessions were Monday thru Friday with work details like grass cutting Saturday morning. It was four hours of class and four hours of practical work during the week. For sport, there were NYA ball teams — adequately equipped for the times football and baseball teams — and the Liberty Theatre from WWI days

Oct. 1934 - FERA camp established (see Issue 4.1A)
 Jan. 1936 - Turned into WPA camp
 Oct. 1936 - WPA camp closed, as did NYA classes.
 Dec. 1, 1936 - Nothing left but a maintenance crew.

Six graduates tell their experiences, p. 2

was the place for entertainment including concerts, plays, recital and classical readings, fewer as the WPA wound down.

One NYA student referred to the school as "the poor man's prep school". Discipline was not a problem. Anyone caught breaking the rules was dismissed.

When weather turned nippy students were allowed to get a mackinaw at one of the warehouses. "Bob" Henry Murphy, one of the students, related to John Curry that the warehouse was filled with clothes and evidently had been there for years. Students could keep the clothes after graduation. Curry supposed the clothes had been destined for Europe or "Bundles for Britain" not needed when the war ended.

Lots of grits and gravy, stews and hash was what they ate, and according to Murphy not what "Mom" cooked. However, no one lost weight, he added.

The great fire at Fort Eustis

The October class of 1936 was the last to graduate, the school being transferred to Manassas in Northern

More on p. 3



Historical series 4.3A-Dec. 93
FT. EUSTIS HISTORICAL &
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Researched, written, and arranged by Dick Ivy, Yorktown, with this page mostly from John Curry's "Denbigh Gone By" in the *Denbigh Gazette*, June 2, 1993, and published by FEHAA, P.O. Box 4468, Ft. Eustis, VA 23604. Supportable corrections or additions welcomed and acknowledged.

Graduates recall some details of the good old days

In September 1993, six graduates of NYA classes in 1936 here, all now between 69 and 76, were guests at a FEHAA dinner, the first time together in 20 years when they met at Fuller's in Hampton. We taped them. They were:

R. H. "Bob" Murphy, mid-Newport News, 75

Bill Eubank, mid-Newport News

John Tribble, Denbigh (NN), 76

Joe Freeman, Grafton (York)

Raymond Foster, Williamsburg

Dan Call, Virginia Beach, 73

One other couldn't be with us that night.

William Allen, Hampton

These NYA graduates in plumbing and sheet metal work, then all 18-22 years old, said they all benefitted from their year-long schooling and most began their careers in the skills they had learned. They said the NYA schooling was in its second year. **About 220 students were enrolled in the various classes at one time.** Bill Eubank "filled in" when a student had dropped out. A normal day was 8 to noon in class, 1 to 4 or 5 in shops. They were allowed to wear anything.

They were recruited from high school for the most part. It was a privilege, one said, thru a local politician. The social worker (a Hubbard of Hubbard Lane?) of York County and Sheriff Sid White were responsible for getting Poquoson student Joe Freeman in the program.

Murphy worked in sheet metal at the Newport News Shipyard from August 1939 until he was 55 and retired in

1978 from a management position. He had been foreman in the sheet metal shop. The Shipyard was paying 40 cents an hour at the time, Bob said, but because of his Ft. Eustis training, he was was offered 52 cents. Another got a job in welding, then switched to a job at National Advisory Council for Aeronautics (NACA), forerunner of today's National Aeronautical Space Administration. Another worked as a plumber at the Shipyard to WWII when he started the Little Sue convenience stores, 38 of them in the area. One plumber was counseled to attend the Shipyard Apprenticeship School to learn specifics using the experience in the NYA school as basis for entry. He later went into the U.S. Navy during the war.

Instructors included plumbing instructor Mr. Davis of Norfolk, automobile instructor Mr. Wilson of Newport News, Mr. Laquarters of Hampton, and a Mr. Daly of Newport News. Student Charles Sharpe (since deceased) met Martha Wood (now reportedly working in a Petersburg nursing home), daughter of Lawrence Wood of Newport News, the instructor of sheet metal. Mr. Wood was known as "Deacon Wood" and students would go to his house on Sunday evening for a family prayer meeting and sing songs.

All played on the football team, many played baseball, and they have pictures to prove it. They lived in barracks near the Cold Storage Warehouse on today's Washington Ave. below the circle. Students had WPA cooks at first, then a professional cook was hired. KP was horrible, one said.

Instructor Mr. Wood, at front rt. outside classroom building. Photos courtesy of Bob Murphy. Were small size photos enlarged.



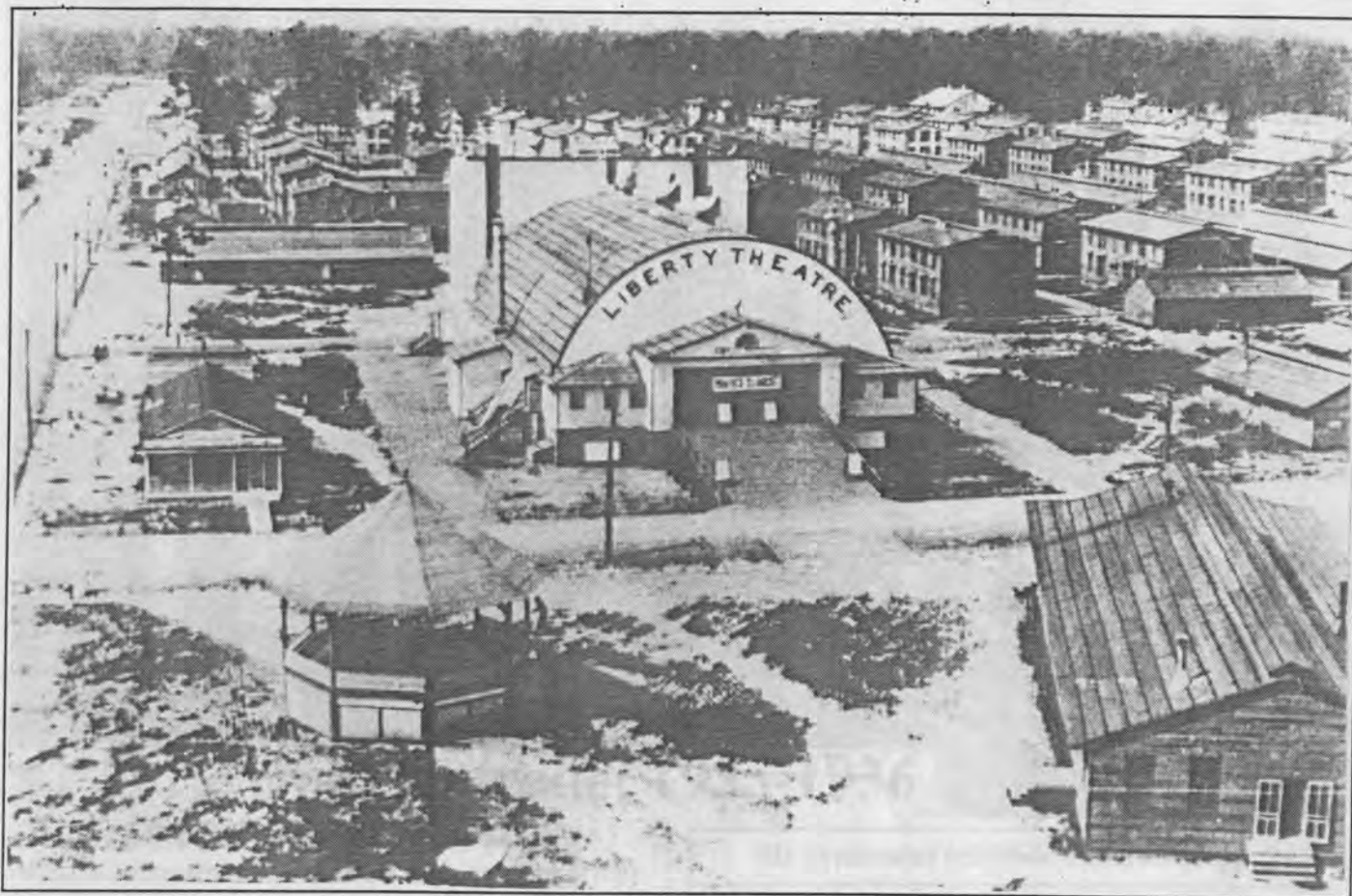


Photo courtesy of U. S. Army Transportation Museum. Camp Eustis in the 20s. Chapel, just right out of picture.

There was a building for recreation with pool tables and a piano. The graduates remembered one dance and entertainment organized by Mrs. Davis, wife of the plumbing instructor. Student Noland Blackman (sp?) met Wilsons' daughter there and later married. Students fished and hunted, "plenty of game," one said. Student Parks hunted rabbits with a bow and arrows. On Sunday morning, those on post went to church at Lebanon Church in Lee Hall.

Students could leave at noon Saturday, had to return by midnight Sunday. Many dated girls in Lee Hall and "we watched the trains come in" and in Phoebus. Hitchhiking was common, people picked them up, they said.

Additional comments by John Curry

One of the alumni recalled when the pig farm burned down. It stood where the hospital does today. The fire lasted three days and the stench was overpowering. When asked how the fire started he emphatically stated "arson". He also believed that the burning of the Liberty Theater was also the work of an arsonist.

He added that a few members of the WPA were "baddies" by WPA standards, and these were the ones responsible for the fires. The fact that were "Baddies" in the WPA is even acknowledged in WPA records. They did their utmost to weed these out, but it appears they did not get them all.

One of the instructors, Mr. Wood, had a daughter that many NYAers gave a wink to. She was Martha Wood and her name is etched in large letters in the plaster board of the Matthew Jones House, where she must have visited [or one of her paramours] in 1937. The graffiti is preserved along with others in the Jones House.

NYA from p. 1

Virginia. The NYA students were to be used to raze buildings at Eustis including the Liberty Theater, reportedly not being relished by the students. Classes broke on Saturday and many of the students went home awaiting classes to resume. Sunday night, the sky was alit with the blaze of the theater fire, and reportedly seen miles around in Denbigh. No blame was fixed, though it seemed suspicious that the students would have had to do it anyway.

[The fires at Fort Eustis has been a subject of controversy over the years. At last, we are closer to the truth.]

Anyone with more information or significant photos about this subject, other student information, complete names of instructors, or supportable corrections, please contact Dick Ivy at 898-5090.